

**STAY HAPPY AND HEALTHY
IN THE TIME OF COVID-19**

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EUROPE
& PACIFIC

WEEKEND EDITION



MLB

Ballparks sit eerily empty on what would have been opening day

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Heartbreaking homecoming

Restrictions change ship's return to port for families at Yokosuka



BY CAITLIN DOORNBOOS
Stars and Stripes

Daisy Morales was heartbroken Thursday when her husband, Ensign Matthew Morales, finally arrived back in port aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS *Antietam* after weeks at sea.

Morales, like other Navy spouses, discovered there

would be no welcoming kisses. No hugs. No holding hands or hoisting children and babies.

The U.S. military at home and abroad over the past two days has heightened restrictions on the movements of service members and their families, access to bases and warships and other measures, to curb the spread of coronavirus, now a global pandemic.

Nonetheless, Morales and other spouses came to the pier Thursday afternoon to sneak a peek at their loved

SEE HEARTBREAKING ON PAGE 6

RELATED STORIES

USS Theodore Roosevelt pauses operations after sailors test positive

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Esper orders halt to movement overseas, raises threat level

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Ashton Andrews and her son, Thomas, pose for a photo with their husband and father, Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Andrews, waving in the distance aboard the USS *Antietam*, at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Thursday.

CAITLIN DOORNBOOS/*Stars and Stripes*

3.3 million in US seek jobless aid

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 3.3 million Americans applied for unemployment benefits last week — nearly five times the previous record set in 1982 — amid a widespread economic shutdown caused by the coronavirus.

The surge in weekly applications was a stunning reflection of the damage the viral outbreak is inflicting on the economy. Filings for unemployment aid generally reflect the pace of layoffs.

Layoffs are sure to accelerate as the U.S. economy sinks into a recession. Revenue has collapsed at restaurants, hotels, movie theaters, gyms, and airlines. Auto sales are plummeting, and car makers have closed factories. Most such employers face loan payments and other fixed costs, so they're cutting jobs to save money.

As job losses mount, some economists say the nation's unemployment rate could approach 13% by May. By comparison, the highest jobless rate during the Great Recession, which ended in 2009, was 10%.

"What seemed impossible just two weeks ago is now reality," said Nancy Vanden Houten, an economist at Oxford Economics, a consulting firm. "The U.S. economy will experience the largest economic contraction on record with the most severe surge in unemployment ever."

The economic deterioration has been swift. As recently as February, the unemployment rate was at a 50-year low of 3.5%. And the economy was growing steadily if modestly.

SEE JOBLESS ON PAGE 9

Some Army promotion boards move online

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Services vary on haircut policies

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	Azores	Change in price	\$3,092	..
Germany	\$2,383	\$2,843	\$3,080	\$2,922	..	..	..	..	..	..
Change in price	-12.8 cents	+10.9 cents	-12.4 cents	-7.4 cents	..	..	..	..	..	..
Netherlands	..	..	..	..	Belgium	..	..	\$2,762	\$2,930	..
Change in price	..	..	-13.0 cents	-12.6 cents	Change in price	..	..	No change	No change	No change
UK	..	\$2,753	\$2,990	\$2,832	Turkey	..	..	\$2,881	\$2,765*	..
Change in price	..	-10.9 cents	-12.4 cents	-7.4 cents	Change in price	..	..	-12.4 cents	-3.2 cents	..

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Change in price	..	\$3,029	\$2,819	..
Japan	..	\$2,999	..	\$2,789	..	..	..	..	..	..
Change in price	..	+13.0 cents	..	+8.0 cents	..	..	..	+13.0 cents	+8.0 cents	..
Okinawa	\$2,299	\$2,990	\$2,832	\$2,789	Guam	\$2,305**	\$2,749	\$3,009	..	..
Change in price	+13.0 cents	+8.0 cents	Change in price	+13.0 cents	+11.0 cents	+13.0 cents

* Diesel E10 ** Midgrade
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EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro (cents) (March 27)	\$1.07
British Pounds (March 27)	€0.958
British pound (March 27)	\$1.17
Japanese yen (March 27)	109.00
South Korean won (March 27)	1,195.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.2022
Chinese Yuan (Renminbi)	7.0750
Denmark (Krone)	6.8023
Egypt (Pound)	15,7483
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1,097.50
Hungary (Forint)	324.15
Israel (Shekel)	3,6010
Italy (Yen)	100.66
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3066
Norway (Krone)	10,5652
Poland (Zloty)	4.15
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3,7559
Singapore (Dollar)	1,4348
South Korea (Won)	1,219.21

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	9.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.12
3-month bill	0.01
30-year bond	1.41

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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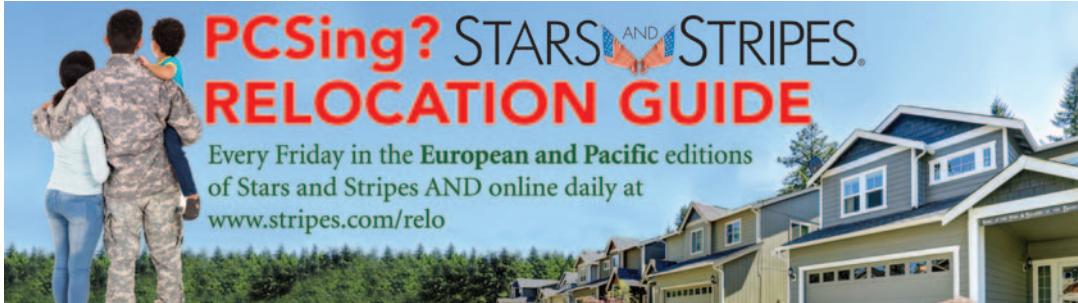
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WAR ON TERRORISM

Afghan, Taliban prisoner release to start soon

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Thousands of prisoners in Afghanistan could start being released by early next week, fulfilling a key condition of the nearly month-old U.S.-Taliban deal to bring peace to the country, government and Taliban officials said.

The two sides agreed on the prisoner release Wednesday, days after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the U.S. would cut \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan after he wasn't able during a lightning visit to Kabul to resolve an impasse between President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival, Abdullah Abdullah, over who won last year's presidential

election.

The rift between the two men has been blamed for stalling the peace process by delaying the naming of a government delegation to hold talks with the Taliban, another key condition of the Feb. 29 deal between the U.S. and Taliban.

But on Wednesday the government published the names of its delegates to the intra-Afghan talks with the Taliban. Shortly before that, the Taliban and the government said they'd reach a compromise on the prisoner release, which was supposed to start more than two weeks ago, after holding a four-hour video conference facilitated by Washington.

The government agreed to re-

lease 100 Taliban prisoners by the end of March, the National Security Council said in a statement released after the video conference. Details of further releases would be announced in the coming days, the statement said.

"It was decided in the virtual meeting that the process of the prisoner release will practically start on March 31," Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen said in a tweet.

Members of the Taliban would visit Bagram prison — near the largest U.S. military base in Afghanistan — to identify detainees from its side that would be released, Shaheen said. He did not provide a timetable or number of Taliban prisoners who would be freed.

freed.

The U.S.-Taliban deal called for up to 5,000 Taliban and up to 1,000 detainees held by the insurgents to be freed by March 10, when intra-Afghan talks were supposed to begin. It spells out that freeing the prisoners and the intra-Afghan talks are conditions that must be filled if U.S. forces are to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan by next spring.

But both the inmate releases and talks between the government and insurgents are behind schedule.

The Afghan government, which was sidelined from negotiations that led to the U.S.-Taliban deal, initially balked at the prisoner release, saying it wanted assurances that freed Taliban fighters

would not return to battle.

Ghani two weeks ago proposed a phased release of inmates who would have their biometric details recorded and sign a guarantee not to return to combat, but the

Taliban rejected that offer, insisting 5,000 of their fighters must be released at once.

The Taliban and government representatives are expected to hold face-to-face talks in the coming days, the National Security Council statement said, to hammer out the details of the prisoner release and intra-Afghan talks, which would seek to map out a path to peace in the country.

wellman.phillip@stripes.com
Twitter: @pwwellman

US hands Q-West base over to Iraq

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Iraqi military leaders, clad in camouflage and surgical masks, accepted the handover of the U.S.-occupied side of Qayara Airfield West, known as Q-West, on Thursday.

The long-planned transfer of the base, 40 miles south of Mosul, and about \$1.7 million in equipment, took place amid a pause in the U.S.-led coalition's training of Iraqi forces and a temporary withdrawal of some foreign forces from the country because of coronavirus fears.

Despite those concerns, U.S. and Iraqi officials shook hands — the Iraqis with gloves.

Q-West "served as a strategic launching point" for Iraqi and coalition forces during the Battle of Mosul, said Brig. Gen. Vincent Barker, director of sustainment for the U.S.-led Operation Inherent Resolve mission helping battle the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, also known by the Arabic acronym Daesh.

With two main runways over 11,000 feet long and 30 hardened aircraft shelters, "the base serves as a hub for the Iraqi air force, who continue to deliver lethal strikes on Daesh bed-down locations," he said in a statement.

It was the second base transfer this month, as coalition forces consolidate their footprint in the country.

The U.S. had previously occupied the base during the Iraq War from 2003 to 2010. Early in the war, 101st Airborne Division soldiers worked with local villages to bolster security, building clinics and schools to assist the locals, some of whom became targets of



MYLES B. CAGGINS III/Twitter

Army Brig. Gen. Vincent Barker, sustainment director for the U.S.-led Operation Inherent Resolve, shakes hands with an Iraqi officer during the transfer of Qayara Airfield West in Iraq on Thursday.



JANZEL SANCHEZ/U.S. Army

The Exchange is emptied out as Qayara Airfield West, Iraq, is prepared for transfer to Iraqi forces, March 13.

insurgent violence.

As ISIS swept across Iraq in 2014, some of those troops feared villages like Jaddalah Ismail, near Q-West, would be destroyed and the people killed for having helped the Americans.

That fall, Q-West fell to the

millitants, who leveled much of it before it was retaken and rebuilt in late 2016 during the Iraqi military's drive toward Mosul, the country's second-largest city and the terrorist group's Iraqi capital at the time.

U.S. rocket artillery, cannons

and helicopters at the base aided in the grueling nine-month campaign to retake the city, which ended in the summer of 2017. Since then, U.S. howitzers have continued to pound militant targets, including an "ISIS island" in the Tigris River used as a hideout after the group's territorial defeat.

Locals who had fled Jaddalah Ismail returned and restarted their lives. When Stars and Stripes met with them in 2017, they remained proud of their bond with the Americans, showing off letters of appreciation, photos and challenge coins they'd saved.

Coalition troops resumed their connection with the locals, officials said in December, but the threat of attacks from Iranian proxy groups forced the troops to halt visits to the villages.

The Americans and other coalition troops will soon depart the base, once equipment transfers to the Iraqi finish, Inherent Resolve said this week.

garland.chad@stripes.com
Twitter: @chadgarland

State orders some to leave Iraq after rocket attack

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

The State Department has ordered some U.S. government employees at diplomatic facilities in Iraq to leave the country, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad said Thursday, hours after two rockets hit the Green Zone.

"Designated U.S. Government employees" were ordered to depart the embassy and the diplomatic support center in Baghdad, as well as the U.S. Consulate General in the northern city of Irbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, the embassy said in an alert sent to U.S. citizens. Security concerns and restricted travel options resulting from the global coronavirus pandemic were cited as reasons for the guidance.

The alert encouraged U.S. citizens to depart Iraq as quickly as possible. A second message issued minutes later said diplomatic officials were working to find options for U.S. citizens to leave "on the next available commercial flight opportunity," citing travel disruptions caused by the coronavirus.

Hours before the messages were sent out, two rockets struck near an operations center that coordinates Iraqi security forces, just a few hundred yards from the U.S. Embassy inside the heavily fortified Green Zone, The Associated Press reported, citing a military statement.

The embassy, which has been a frequent target of indirect fire attacks, has not been providing public services, the State Department alert said. Visa services were suspended at both the Baghdad and Irbil posts.

Thursday's attack followed one last week when three rockets hit near the American Embassy, and a deadly attack earlier this month on a U.S.-occupied base north of Baghdad.

MILITARY

Guam Air Force base getting \$260 million upgrades

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam — The Air Force is building more than \$260 million worth of new facilities on Guam to support its largest aircraft, including transports, tankers and B-52 bombers, according to military officials.

Work is already underway at construction sites next to Andersen's runway, where the hulking steel frames of several massive half-built hangars, whose contracts were awarded between December 2014 and February 2015, rise above the base.

One of the new facilities is a \$132.6 million "Tanker General Purpose Maintenance Hangar," 36th Wing spokesman Master Sgt. Richard Ebensberger said in an email Friday.

"This is a hardened facility, sized and configured to sustain critical missions," he said.

The hangar, due for completion by July 2021, is designed to accommodate large planes such as the C-17 Globemaster III transport, the KC-46A Pegasus tanker and the B-52 Stratofortress bomber, as well as various types of jet fighters, he said.

"The hangar bay will support aircraft maintenance, repair and regularly scheduled inspections that require complete protection from the elements, to include routine maintenance and airframe repairs," he said.

It will include space for command and administration, flight



SETH ROBSON/*Stars and Stripes*

The Air Force is building more than \$260 million in new facilities on Guam to support its largest aircraft, including transports, tankers and B-52 bombers.

planning, aircrew briefing and debriefing, training and other activities that are necessary to keep a squadron mission capable during a contingency, Ebensberger said.

Nearby, workers are building a \$128 million cast-in-place reinforced concrete fuel systems maintenance hangar with sup-

port space.

"The support space will provide heating, plumbing, ventilation, compressed air and fire detection and suppression," Ebensberger said.

The facility, due for completion in June 2021, includes space to store spare parts, tools and hazardous materials, as well as ad-

ministration areas.

"This hangar will provide a single aircraft parking bay and support personnel space," he said.

It will support missions such as rotational bombers, fighters, tankers and RQ-4 Global Hawk drones, he said.

The work is in addition to \$8.7 billion worth of Navy construc-

Supreme Court won't hear case on Marine recruit's death

BY MELISSA NANN BURKE
The Detroit News

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Tuesday said that it wouldn't hear the case brought against the U.S. military by the family of a 20-year-old Marine from Taylor who died four years ago during boot camp, ending a three-year legal battle.

In a one-page order, the justices indicated that they would let stand the decision by the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals to dismiss the wrongful death suit brought by the parents of Raheel Siddiqui in 2017.

The appeals court ruled last year that the lawsuit is barred under the oft-criticized Feres doctrine, which relegates claims related to injuries to active-duty military personnel to the military courts, not the civil courts.

"Unless and until" the justices overturn the 70-year-old Feres doctrine, the courts remain bound by it and, "accordingly, find plaintiffs' claims barred for lack of subject matter jurisdiction," the 6th Circuit wrote last year.

The Siddiqui family had sued the Marine Corps in 2017, alleging that he was assaulted, hazed, tortured and discriminated against at the training depot on Parris Island, S.C., because of his

'This case was an ideal opportunity for the court to address the injustice that the Feres doctrine has created and perpetuated for decades.'

Shiraz Khan
Siddiqui family attorney

Muslim faith.

The complaint argued that Marine recruiters misled Siddiqui by not warning him about the abuse of other Muslim recruits at Parris Island, and that military officials were negligent in failing to protect him once at the training depot, where Siddiqui died in March 2016 after falling three stories.

Siddiqui's parents, Ghazala and Masood Siddiqui, argued that the government was also negligent by almost immediately declaring their son's death a suicide without fully investigating the circumstances.

The family's lawyer expressed disappointment after the order was published Tuesday.

"This case was an ideal opportunity for the court to address the injustice that the Feres doctrine has created and perpetuated for decades," attorney Shiraz Khan

said.

"While we are disappointed that we will not have an opportunity to argue this case before the Supreme Court, our fight for justice is not over. Evidence has a way of speaking for itself, and we will be looking into the possibility of legislative solutions for the benefit of all Americans."

Khan had argued that the Feres doctrine did not apply to the case because Raheel Siddiqui had not yet started his active military service and was a civilian when he first started meeting with Marine recruiters in 2015.

The appeals court disagreed by arguing that "if Siddiqui's death was incident to his military service, then a claim of negligent enlistment relating to his death is also barred by Feres."

"There is no dispute that Siddiqui was on active duty when he died, and we conclude that his

death during basic training falls squarely within the wide reach of the Feres doctrine," Judge Jane B. Stranch wrote for a three-judge panel of the 6th Circuit.

Like the district court, the appellate panel criticized the Feres doctrine's reliance on the military's so-called "generous" no-fault compensation, saying that it's outdated.

U.S. District Judge Arthur Tarnow in his November 2018 ruling said that the \$100,000 death benefit and \$400,000 life insurance payout that the Siddiquis received "are mere fractions of most wrongful death awards."

The September 11th Fund's awards for wrongful death ranged from \$2 million to \$3 million, Tarnow noted.

A Marine investigation into Siddiqui's death recommended discipline against several Marine supervisors, including Gunnery Sgt. Joseph A. Felix Jr.

A military court last year affirmed Felix's conviction and 10-year prison sentence for crimes including the abuse of three Muslim recruits, including Siddiqui.

Felix's former supervisor, Lt. Col. Joshua Kissoon, pleaded guilty to charges including negligently returning Felix to work while he was under investigation for hazing another Muslim recruit.

tion on Guam to support the relocation of 5,000 Marines from the Japanese island of Okinawa.

The Guam construction is likely in response to increased vulnerability of more forward locations, according to Jan van Tol, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington.

"The erratic behavior of the [Rodrigo] Duterte government in the Philippines concerning U.S. access to Philippine locations is also a likely contributing factor," van Tol said in an email Tuesday.

Experts have noted the rapid buildup of Chinese missile forces and their ability to strike U.S. bases in Japan, for example.

"The [Chinese] military also has capabilities to strike Guam at distance, particularly with ballistic missiles, but of course the longer the range, the costlier the strike weapon and the fewer of those they have, thus the greater the potential for active as well as passive defensive systems to be able to adequately protect Guam," he said.

The prospect of a Chinese attack on Guam means that planners should develop additional dispersed and perhaps rudimentary bases on nearby islands such as Saipan, Tinian and Palau, he said.

"Bottom line: U.S. buildup in Guam signals U.S. commitment to remain an active player in the [western Pacific]," he said.

robert.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @SethRobson1

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Army says some promotions to be allowed online

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army will allow commanders to conduct some promotion boards by video conference and has suspended temporarily some requirements for enlisted soldiers to be promoted as it responds to the deepening coronavirus pandemic that has forced military posts to close to nonessential personnel.

The adjustments balance the need for the Army to advance soldiers to ensure combat readiness while taking measures to protect the force from the virus, which has sickened at least 44 active-duty soldiers, Army officials said Wednesday.

"We are trying to get ahead and be proactive and creative," said Sgt. Maj. Mark A. Clark with the Army's directorate of military personnel management office. "We want commanders and soldiers to understand that we're thinking about what's best for them and what's best for the Army all at the same time."

Sgt. Maj. Mark A. Clark
Army personnel

needed by staff sergeants and sergeants first class to be selected for promotion. It will also allow soldiers to use their most recent fitness test and weapons qualifications scores for their promotion boards, Clark said.

The temporary exemption to the professional military education course requirements — the Advanced Leader Course for staff sergeants and the Senior Leader Course for sergeants first class — does not mean soldiers will not attend those courses. They will be required to complete those classes in the future, Clark said.

Soldiers who have a track record of completing their required education courses will be promoted before others who have not completed such courses, he said.

The Army Physical Fitness Test will remain a requirement for soldiers to be promoted, but because many units are not able to conduct such tests during the coronavirus pandemic, soldiers will be able to submit their most recent score for the board, Clark said.

The temporary policy change also means soldiers whose last APFT score is expired — fitness test scores are valid for one year — will not be deemed ineligible for promotion as long as the outbreak continues, he said.

The service is making a similar policy exemption to allow soldiers to submit their most recent weapons qualifications scores for their promotion boards regardless of when those scores were recorded, Clark said.

The service, Clark added, will continue to review its promotions boards' policies every 30 days throughout the coronavirus outbreak and provide the force further guidance as warranted.

dickstein.corey@stripes.com

Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

Defense firms work to make masks, ventilators — but will it be fast enough?

By TARA COPP
AND MICHAEL WILNER
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department has begun signing contracts with defense firms to ramp up production of ventilators and N95 respirator masks in short supply around the country, but the medical equipment may not reach hospitals before coronavirus cases peak in the next few weeks, the Pentagon's head of acquisition said.

"We will strive to do everything we can before June, but we have no data to address that now," Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Ellen Lord said Tuesday at a media briefing at the Pentagon.

The hastened production is being managed under the Defense Production Act, a law that gives the president authority to protect critical national defense supplies by allowing him to prioritize contracts or provide loans, grants or other economic incentives to accelerate their production.

Through the DPA, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will identify what items are needed and then DOD will place and manage orders. But only a few contracts have been executed so far.

Over the weekend, HHS signed a contract with five firms to produce N95 respirator masks, and DOD, under its DPA authority, will now work with those vendors



IRFAN KHAN, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Teresa Olivas prepares single face mask bags at a store in Upland, Calif., this month.

to be able to produce the masks quickly and in large quantities, Pentagon spokesman Air Force Lt. Col. Mike Andrews said.

Asked why the ramp-up for mask production was so late in coming, when the Pentagon had known about the severity of the pandemic for weeks, Lord said the Pentagon had not yet been directed by HHS or FEMA on what were the specific needs.

"They have to give us the demand signal," Lord said. "Once we get clarity on the demand signal we'll execute. If you'll recall, FEMA just got the lead role on Friday."

"This is all very new," she said. "I know COVID[-19] has been

here for several weeks, but this coordination at this level of detail just started on Friday."

Likewise, the military's top medic was questioned Tuesday as to why DOD had not obtained more machines to process test kits for deployed forces and get a better picture of the virus's spread among the military.

It will be weeks to months before the machines will be available, said Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Friedrichs, surgeon general for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"We'd love to have had it in January, but we didn't know the virus was going to be this big of an issue in January," he said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

DOD halts all overseas travel, adds base limits

By COREY DICKSTEIN,
CAITLIN M. KENNEY
AND KAT BOUZA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Mark Esper has issued orders barring nearly all official movement for Defense Department personnel overseas and instituted new health protection measures worldwide as the Pentagon attempts to slow the spreading coronavirus, which has sickened at least 600 people in the military community.

Esper's stop-movement order applies to all service members, DOD civilians and sponsored family members serving in any location overseas, the Pentagon announced late Wednesday. The order halts almost all travel for at least 60 days related to "exercises, deployments, redeployments and other global force management activities," according to a Pentagon memorandum.

The order came just hours after Esper had elected to raise the health protection condition level at military bases worldwide to its second-highest threat level, HPCON Charlie. That decision places restrictions on large gatherings, adds temperature checks for personnel at building access points and largely limits base access to mission-essential individuals.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Friedrichs, the Joint Staff surgeon, told reporters Wednesday that he expected military-related cases of the virus to continue to increase for the foreseeable future.

"Our curve is not flattening," Friedrichs said during a Pentagon news briefing. "... We think the best way to limit that growth or mitigate that growth are the measures that we've been talking about."

Thursday morning, Pentagon officials announced an increase of 163 coronavirus cases worldwide among its service members, their dependents, DOD civilian workers and defense contractors. Pentagon officials said 600 indi-

'This measure is taken ... to protect U.S. personnel and preserve the operational readiness of our global force.'

Pentagon memorandum

viduals linked to the military had now tested positive for the virus worldwide. One person, a defense contractor, died of the disease Saturday.

The largest increase was among military troops with 73 new cases reported, marking the biggest single-day jump of cases among troops announced during the outbreak. As of Thursday, 304 service members had tested positive for the virus in recent weeks. Among them, 24 had recovered from the disease and 15 were hospitalized, DOD reported.

The new data also included the first case of a service member permanently stationed at the Pentagon to test positive for the virus, a Marine who has been in self-isolation since March 13. The Air Force previously announced two individuals — an active-duty airman stationed elsewhere and a defense contractor assigned to the Pentagon — had been in the military's Arlington, Va., headquarters in March and later tested positive for the virus. Both have since been isolated and received medical care, officials said.

Friedrichs on Wednesday declined to speculate about a timeline for slowing the virus' spread or ending measures implemented across the force — like telework to allow for social distancing. On Tuesday, Esper and Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said people should expect the outbreak to last at least three months in the United States.

Esper's overseas stop-movement order will likely impact some 90,000 service members slated to deploy or return to their home stations during the next 60 days, Pentagon officials said.

However, it should not slow

the ongoing drawdown of American forces in Afghanistan, which started this month as part of a peace plan agreed to with the Taliban late last month.

The drawdown of some 3,400 troops, leaving about 8,600 in Afghanistan, "is scheduled to be completed within 135 days following the signed agreement," the memo stated.

Esper's order also allows for other exceptions, which could be granted by commanders for issues such as obtaining medical treatment, mission-essential travel or humanitarian reasons on a case-by-case basis, the memo states. Other authorized exceptions include scheduled deployments or redeployments of Navy vessels, provided they have met the restriction of movement requirements now in place.

"This measure is taken to aid in further prevention of the spread of the coronavirus disease to protect U.S. personnel and preserve the operational readiness of our global force," according to the memo.

Friedrichs said he hopes the measures being taken in the United States will start to show similar success as seen in South Korea in stopping the spread of the virus. But it could take weeks to find out for certain.

"This is a pandemic," he said. "This is a significant infectious disease outbreak, and it is going to be weeks, not days. It's going to take intensive measures, as we are implementing, to mitigate it."

Stars and Stripes staff member Joseph Dittler contributed to this report.
dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC
kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinMKenney
bouza.katrina@stripes.com



CAITLIN DOORBOS/Stars and Stripes

A drop box for items stands outside the gate leading to the USS Antietam at Yokosuka Naval Base on Thursday.

Heartbreaking: Families leave food and packages for sailors held on the Antietam

FROM FRONT PAGE

ones aboard the Antietam. Sailors came out to the bow to wave to their families and talk to them via cellphone.

"The whole virus thing is hard enough without family out here," Morales said.

Restricting sailors to their vessels puts a "bubble" around incoming ships to halt the virus' spread, base commander Capt. Rich Jarrett said Thursday during a virtual town hall on the official base Facebook page. It was unclear Thursday whether other ships at Yokosuka were given similar orders.

Morales said she had stocked up on snacks and groceries at the base commissary the night before in anticipation of her husband's arrival.

"I have enough food for the whole ship," she said, smiling through tears after waving goodbye to her husband from afar.

Looking for a silver lining, she and other members of the ship's

family readiness group took shopping lists from sailors on board who were looking forward to visiting the Navy Exchange after weeks at sea.

Throughout the afternoon, families dropped off grocery bags and packages for the sailors in a large container at the gate where the ship is berthed. The words "ANTITAM DROP BOX" were handwritten in large letters on the side.

"Everyone is sending lists. A lot don't have spouses who can go to the NEX (for them)," said Ashton Andrews, whose husband, Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Andrews, is an operations officer aboard the Antietam.

Andrews said that though her husband could not come home, the Antietam's "family readiness group and the community are so supportive."

doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos

AAFES: Hang on to cash, pay with credit or debit cards

By NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is asking customers to pay with credit and debit cards, not cash, saying it will help protect people from the coronavirus.

Some stores might "transition to a cards-only environment" and others might not provide cash back and check-cashing transactions, the statement emailed to customers Wednesday said.

"Studies show that paper money and

coins can harbor bacteria and viruses long after they change hands," said the statement, which asked customers to rely on plastic.

Historically considered filthy, cash is under increased suspicion and many stores are going cashless to try to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The Federal Reserve is enforcing a holding period of seven to 10 days before processing currency shipments from Asia and Europe.

Swipe-and-dip machines have reduced

the need for store clerks to touch consumers' cards.

But credit cards, payment tablets and ATM keypads also carry a variety of germs, in some cases more than cash, a 2018 study said.

The study by CreditCards.com and the University of Texas at Austin found that some cards carried staph and salmonella bacteria.

Another study published March 17 in the New England Journal of Medicine suggest-

ed the coronavirus could live up to three days on plastic. It could live on copper for four hours and a day on cardboard, which is a porous surface like paper.

Additionally, shoppers using cards that require signatures may be using the same stylus or pen that others used.

It's hard to clean cash. But credit cards can be cleaned the same way as hands: with soap and water.

montgomery.nancy@stripes.com

Twitter: @montgomerynance

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Services seek balance on grooming policies

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Sailors will get to grow out their locks while Marines will keep their high-and-tight haircuts as military services take different approaches to grooming as they adhere to social distancing to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

The Navy Exchange Service Command, which runs barber shops and salons on Navy installations, directed the closure of all its shops worldwide except for those at the Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill., so recruits have access to haircuts, according to a statement issued Monday.

The closures are expected to last for at least 14 days.

The announcement follows Navy guidance issued March 18 about relaxed standards for hair lengths, though not facial hair. However, longer hair cannot interfere with wearing protective personal equipment such as helmets and masks, according to the guidance.

Marine Corps Community Services is allowing barber shops and exchanges to remain open on installations, according to a statement by Bryan Driver, a spokesman for Marine Corps Community Services.

Marine Corps installations are taking precautions to prevent the spread of the virus based on local conditions, according to the statement, including deep cleaning procedures several times a

day, limiting access to active-duty service members only, and limiting how many people are inside buildings.

The Army is still following its grooming policies, however, it is trusting installation commanders to make exceptions if necessary to protect their soldiers.

"Grooming standards are an important part of good order and discipline in the Army, though at the end of the day, we need to make sure we're doing what we can to keep our people safe," Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grin said in a statement. "Just like with readiness and protecting the force, it's not an easy balance to strike. There isn't a one-size-fits all solution. We have to be agile, and I know we have the right leaders in the right places to make these tough decisions."

Some installations have taken actions in regard to base grooming services. Barber shops, salons, and spas at some Army and Air Force Exchange Services facilities, or AAFES, have been closed by the installation commands, according to a statement by Chris Ward, a spokesman for AAFES.

"For those locations that remain open, exchange barbers are increasing their focus on sanitation, including staying home if sick, frequent hand washing and routinely cleaning door knobs, faucet handles, etc.," he said.

kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlinmkenney



GRACE J. KINDRED/U.S. Marine Corps

A new recruit with Alpha Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, receives his initial haircut during receiving at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego in February.

Another US military child care center in Japan closes pending virus test results

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

Another child development center on a U.S. military facility in Japan has been closed due to possible exposure to the coronavirus.

The Sagamihara Family Housing Area Child Development Center was shuttered Thursday "out of an abundance of caution," according to a message posted that afternoon on the Army Garrison Japan Facebook page.

Sagamihara, near Tokyo in Kanagawa prefecture, is a housing area for service members and their families posted to Camp Zama, the home of U.S. Army Japan and other Army units.

"This closure is being directed due to possible contact with an individual who is testing COVID-19 positive," the post said, using the official name of the new coronavirus.

None of the children or staff members within the center have tested positive for the virus, it added.

Parents were asked to pick up their children as soon as possible Thursday.

The center will be closed Friday "for deep cleaning and sanitization," according to the garrison



KEITH PANNELL/U.S. Army

Staff members on a U.S. base in Germany deep clean a child development center as a precaution against coronavirus on March 19. Similar measures were taken at centers in Japan.

statement. It said further information would be forthcoming.

"Parents will be asked to provide care for their own children on Friday," the statement said. "Thank you for your patience as we continue to make your health and safety our No. 1 priority."

Earlier this month, child development centers at Yokosuka Naval Base, also in Kanagawa prefecture, and Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo were closed

pending the results of coronavirus tests. Those tests — a child and a staff member at Yokosuka and a staff member at Yokota — came back negative.

The Yokosuka center has reopened while the Yokota facility remains shuttered in line with Defense Department school closures.

ditzler.joseph@stripes.com
Twitter: @JosephDitzler

Yokosuka-based sailor confirmed to have illness

BY CAITLIN DOORNbos
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A Yokosuka-based sailor tested positive Thursday for coronavirus, becoming the first U.S. service member in Japan confirmed to have the illness, U.S. Forces Japan officials told Stars and Stripes.

The sailor — whose name was not released — had been confined to a room since returning from leave in the United States on March 15, said USFJ spokeswoman Maj. Genieve White.

The confinement was in accordance with a restriction of movement directive for those returning from international travel that USFJ issued four days prior.

The sailor has been placed in isolation and is being treated at Naval Hospital Yokosuka, White said.

USFJ went nearly three months without a positive case after the coronavirus was first discovered in Wuhan, China, in December. The illness has since become a global pandemic.

As of Wednesday, Japan has reported 1,193 confirmed cases, an increase of 320 over the course of a week, according to the World Health Organization situation

reports. Forty-three people have died of the illness in Japan — more than double the number of deaths reported a week prior.

The Yokosuka base on Thursday set its health protection condition to Charlie following Indo-Pacific Command's Wednesday decision to upgrade the threat level. At Charlie, the community is considered at a "substantial risk" of infection and further restrictions are implemented to control the coronavirus' spread.

On Wednesday, Navy Forces Japan restricted all Navy personnel to the installations or their off-base homes.

"All off-base restaurants, bars, cafes, night clubs and like establishments, indoor fitness facilities, onsen and public baths are off limits," Naval Forces Japan commander Rear Adm. B. P. Fort wrote in a memorandum announcing the change Wednesday.

Naval Hospital Yokosuka gained the capability to process coronavirus test results last week and can now analyze about 40 a day. Previously, tests were sent to laboratories off base in Japan or to the U.S. for processing, and results could take up to a week to return.

doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Aircraft carrier diverts to Guam with more cases

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Five more sailors have tested positive for the coronavirus on the USS Theodore Roosevelt, forcing the ship to travel to Guam to conduct widespread testing of the crew, the acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly said Thursday.

"We found several more cases on board the ship," Modly told reporters in a news briefing from the Pentagon. "We are in the process now of testing 100% of the crew of that ship to ensure that we're able to contain whatever spread might have occurred there on the ship. But I also want to emphasize that the ship is operationally capable and could do its mission if required to do so."

The new cases bring the total confirmed cases on the ship to eight. But Modly said that several more sailors are in isolation.

A defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said that the cases on the Roosevelt are increasing and the ship is focused now on doing testing and more deep cleaning in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that there are at least 23 cases on the aircraft carrier, according to an unnamed defense official.

There are 800 coronavirus test kits on the ship and more being flown there Thursday, Modly said. The Roosevelt can do limited testing and processing of tests on the ship, but most tests will be sent to Defense Department laboratories for processing. The testing of the 5,000 crew members will be a mix of swab tests and surveillance tests.

While the ship is at a pier in Guam, no sailor will leave the area, according to Modly.

The Navy seems to have the highest number of positive coronavirus cases at 133, or one-third of cases in the Defense Department, he said. But Modly also said he was uncertain why that is and would not speculate on

any causes. He said that more analysis needed to be done to determine the reason for the higher number of cases.

A Reuters story Thursday reported that the Pentagon would no longer provide detailed data about the coronavirus cases in the department, such as locations of people who are infected. The Navy has been sending out daily updates on new cases across the service, and Modly said Thursday that while they have to consider operational and privacy concerns, he wanted to continue to share how the virus is impacting the service.

"We will follow the direction of the secretary of defense in terms of this, but from our perspective — from my perspective, being as transparent as possible is probably the best path," he said.

The Marine Corps has 44 positive coronavirus cases, of which 31 are Marines, five are civilian workers, five are dependents and three are contractors.

At Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., where basic training is conducted, two Marine recruits have tested positive, Modly said. Additionally, two other Marines stationed at the base, but who work separate from recruit training, have also tested positive.

The Marine Corps has canceled or postponed exercises and nonessential training, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger said.

Readiness of the force is still a priority, according to Berger, so only essential training is ongoing with modifications to deal with social distancing, such as more spacing between Marines at pistol ranges.

"We are mandated by law to be the nation's most ready force and that's what I think you expect us to be," Berger said.

kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlinmkenney



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Master Sgt. Nicholas Kailing, a maintenance production supervisor and crew chief, reviews a checklist during a base readiness exercise at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, on Wednesday.

At Spangdahlem, US F-16s are flying as airmen adjust exercise

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

SPANGDAHLEM AIR BASE, Germany — The coronavirus pandemic has stood daily routines on their head around the world, but at this Air Force base in Germany's rural Eifel region, one thing hasn't changed: The F-16s are still flying.

The 52nd Fighter Wing has been taking advantage of a late-March string of crystal-clear, sunny days in southwestern Germany and launching F-16 sorties as part of a base readiness exercise — modified, of course, because of the coronavirus.

The exercise, which usually involves practicing for combat, this year takes into account the fact that airmen are dealing with the real-life threat of contracting the virus, which, in some cases, causes severe lung illness and death.

"We are in a real-world COVID-19 environment, and in the future, it may be some other contagion or something like it that we're dealing with," said wing commander Col. David C. Epperson, using the acronym for the coronavirus disease.

"Our adversaries are watching how we're going to react to something like COVID-19," he said. "It's important for us to continue to exercise and to demonstrate that we have that mission readiness today."

The virus has infected nearly half a million people on every continent except Antarctica and been blamed for more than 22,000 deaths.

Although Spangdahlem has had

no confirmed cases of the virus so far, adjustments have been made to routines to minimize risk.

Operations and maintenance crews have been split into teams that work on different days during the exercise to allow them to maintain more social distance, Epperson said.

They alternate 10-hour shifts daily instead of splitting two 12-hour shifts per day, shortening the typical round-the-clock exercise schedule to reduce exposure.

"To load even one training missile on our aircraft requires three people," he said. "But by making sure the team is not close to my other team that loads munitions, I can make sure if one team gets exposed to COVID, the other team is still safe."

Keeping a safe distance from each other is tricky, but airmen are doing their best, said Master Sgt. Nicholas Kailing, a maintenance production supervisor.

"We're used to working very closely. We'll normally have three people in a three-foot area," he said.

Another adjustment is that video conferencing has replaced the face-to-face meetings which would normally take place during an exercise between the wing and leadership, Epperson said.

"It's just reminding people ... that we can spread out, we can still communicate at a greater distance away from each other," he said. "And, really, it creates better security ... we're not a concentrated target for an adversary."

The Agile Combat Employment part of the exercise, in which forces spread out and operate with minimal locations with minimal

personnel, resources and time, has also been altered because of the coronavirus.

The plan before the pandemic was for a small team to set up at Ramstein for a few days and drop into another base farther afield to refuel, practicing how to pick up and go with the right items to sustain them for several days.

But the virus changed that, and the team has instead set up on a separate area of Spangdahlem's flight line to simulate a forward operating site.

The airmen involved said that even though they haven't left Spangdahlem, they've had to deal with spotty communication and long waits for small items, making them feel as if they're in a remote location.

After they unpacked, for example, and realized they'd forgotten to bring lightbulbs, they had to wait hours for them to be delivered — roughly the same time it would have taken had they been at Ramstein.

As a result, "we were in a dark tent for the first four hours of the day," said F-16 pilot Capt. Tim Miller, who's acting as a deployed squad commander. "We're building the checklist as we go."

How to launch sorties with minimal resources while dealing with a contagious virus are among the many lessons being learned, Epperson said.

"We've had to adapt," he said. "It's not business as usual, but we have figured out ways to make sure we're still mission-ready."

svan.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripesktown

US Forces Korea confirms another case at Camp Humphreys

By KIM GABEL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Another person tested positive for the coronavirus on the largest U.S. military base in South Korea on Thursday, raising the total number of cases affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea to 11.

USFK provided no details about the person who was infected or the timeline in its announcement late Thursday, promising more information Friday.

Only one American soldier has been confirmed to have the virus so far in South Korea. The others were the soldier's wife, two other active-duty dependents,

the widow of a military retiree, an American contractor and four South Korean employees.

Officials were conducting contact tracing to determine if anybody else may have been exposed in the current case. Crews were also activated to clean the areas where the person was known to have been, including the main

gym on Camp Humphreys, officials said.

"We have secured all areas that they were on and the clean team is rapidly moving through, conducting a thorough deep clean," garrison commander Col. Michael Trembley said in a brief statement on Facebook live.

It was the third infection con-

firmed at Camp Humphreys, home to USFK headquarters and a population of more than 37,000. The others were at bases in the southeastern city of Daegu and nearby areas, which were at the center of the outbreak that began in mid-February in South Korea.

gabel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @kimgabel

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pelosi forecasts House will OK Senate's aid bill

By ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she has massive \$2.2 trillion coronavirus economic relief bill approved by the Senate will pass the House on Friday with "strong bipartisan support."

Pelosi spoke to reporters at the Capitol on Thursday, a day after the Senate unanimously approved the measure. President Donald Trump is expected to sign the legislation immediately.

The pandemic's toll continued to increase across the United States, with almost 70,000 confirmed cases and more than 1,000 on Thursday afternoon, according to Johns Hopkins University's tally.

The package comes to the House as fresh evidence emerges that the economy is in a recession. The government reported 3.3 million new weekly unemployment claims, four times the previous record.

"We will have a victory tomorrow for America's workers," Pelosi said, praising the bill's expansion of unemployment benefits. She encouraged companies battered by the pandemic to keep paying their workers, even those who are furloughed.

"Tomorrow we'll bring the bill to the floor," she told reporters. "It will pass. It will pass with

strong bipartisan support."

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said in a TV interview the economy "may well be in a recession."

The unanimous Senate vote late Wednesday came despite misgivings on both sides about whether it goes too far or not far enough and capped days of difficult negotiations as Washington confronted a national challenge unlike any it has faced.

The 880-page measure is the largest economic relief bill in U.S. history. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell appeared somber and exhausted as he announced the vote — and he released senators from Washington until April 20, though he promised to recall them if needed.

"Pray for one another, for all of our families and for our country," said McConnell, R-Ky.

"The legislation now before us is now historic because it is meant to match a historic crisis," said Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "Our health care system is not prepared to care for the sick. Our workers are without work. Our businesses cannot do business. Our factories lie idle. The gears of the American economy have ground to a halt."

The package is intended as relief for a sinking economy and a nation facing a grim toll from an infection that's killed more than 21,000 people worldwide.



MICHAEL BRYANT, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/AP

A Costco employee looks toward a shopper wearing a mask and snorkel to shop, as she sanitizes carts that are returned from the parking lot to fight coronavirus, in King of Prussia, Pa., on Wednesday.

Underscoring the effort's sheer magnitude, the bill finances a response with a price tag that equals half the size of the entire \$4 trillion-plus annual federal budget. The \$2.2 trillion estimate is the White House's best guess.

Insistently optimistic, Trump said of the greatest public health emergency in anyone's lifetime, "I don't think it's going to end up being such a rough patch" and anticipated the economy soaring "like a rocket ship" when it's over.

The drive by leaders to speed the bill through the Senate was Wednesday slowed as four conservative Republican senators from states whose economies are dominated by low-wage jobs demanded changes, saying the legislation as written was so generous that workers like store clerks might

opt to stay on unemployment instead of return to their jobs. They settled for a failed vote to modify the provision.

Wednesday's delays followed Democratic stalling tactics earlier in the week as Schumer held out for additional funding for states and hospitals and other provisions.

The sprawling measure is the third coronavirus response bill produced by Congress and by far the largest. It builds on efforts focused on vaccines and emergency response, sick and family medical leave for workers and food aid.

Senate passage delivered the legislation to the Democratic-controlled House, which is expected to pass it Friday. House members are scattered around the country. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said the measure

would pass by voice vote without lawmakers having to return to Washington.

House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Thursday his members were on board.

"Every day matters, so we want to get this done quickly," McCarthy said.

The package would give direct payments to most Americans, expand unemployment benefits and provide a \$367 billion program for small businesses to keep making payroll while workers are forced to stay home. It includes a heavily negotiated \$500 billion program for guaranteed, subsidized loans to larger industries, including airlines. Hospitals would get significant help as well.

Jobless: Funding, staffing limitations hamper states' efforts to process claims

FROM FRONT PAGE

Yet by the April-June quarter of the year, some economists think the economy will shrink at its steepest annual pace ever — a contraction that could reach 30%.

In its report Thursday, the Labor Department said 3,283 million people applied for unemployment benefits last week, up from 282,000 during the previous week. Yet many people who have lost jobs in recent weeks have been unable to file for unemployment aid because state websites and phone systems have been overwhelmed by a crush of applicants and have frozen up.

That logjam suggests that Thursday's report actually understates the magnitude of job cuts last week. So does the fact that workers who are not on company payrolls — gig workers, free-lancers, the self-employed — aren't currently eligible for unemployment benefits even though in many cases they're no longer able to earn money.

With layoffs surging, a significant expansion of unemployment benefits for the millions who will lose jobs as a result of the coronavirus outbreak was included in an economic relief bill nearing final approval in Congress. One provision in the bill would provide an extra \$600 a week on top of the unemployment aid that states provide. Another would extend 13 additional weeks of benefits beyond the six months of jobless aid that most states offer.

The new legislation would also extend unemployment benefits, for the first time, to gig workers and others who are not on company payrolls.

Separate legislation passed last week provides up to \$1 billion to states to enhance their ability to process claims. But that money will take time to disburse.

In California, claims for unemployment benefits more than tripled last week to 187,000. In New York, they rose by a factor of five to 80,334. Nationwide, about 2.25% of the entire workforce ap-

plied for jobless aid last week. In Nevada, the figure was 6.8%, in Rhode Island 7.5%.

Jessy Morancy of Hollywood, Fla., was laid off Friday from her job as a wheelchair attendant and customer service agent at Fort Lauderdale Airport. Morancy, 29, called the state unemployment office Monday to try to file for unemployment benefits but encountered just a recorded message telling her to call back later.

She was also concerned that even a full unemployment benefit of \$275 a week would be less than half of what she earned at her job and insufficient to provide for her children, ages 10 and 7.

"I'm still in a state of shock," Morancy said.

Even for those able to file a claim, the benefits will take time to kick in. It typically takes two to three weeks before applicants receive any money. State agencies must first contact their former employers to verify their work and earnings history. Only then can the employee's weekly unem-

ployment benefits be calculated.

Worsening the problem, most state agencies that handle unemployment claims are operating at historically low funding levels and staffing that are intended to handle a trickle of claims. Just weeks ago, the job market was in the strongest shape it had been in decades.

Kim Boldrini-Sen, 41, has also struggled to even file her claim. She has tried in two states: In Connecticut, where she works as an acupuncturist in a private practice, and in New York, where she lives and has her own acupuncture business.

In Connecticut, she thought her application had been submitted. But when she returned last week to re-file as applicants are required to do each week, she found there was no record of her initial filing. After taking an hour to file, she received a pop-up notice that she was ineligible to do so online.

In New York, the state's website repeatedly crashed when she

was halfway through filling out her request. When she finally managed to press submit, she received a pop-up saying she had to file over the phone. That hasn't worked well, either:

"I've called at all hours of the day," she said. "That's been my life for a week, and I still can't get through to anyone."

On Monday, the New York State Department of Labor tweeted, "If you have been unable to get through our phone and/or online system this week, please try again."

"We are working as hard as we can to ensure that all benefits are paid and appreciate your patience," the agency said on Twitter.

Ellen Zentner, an economist at Morgan Stanley, said in a note to clients that 17 million jobs could be lost through May — twice the entire 8.7 million jobs that were lost in the Great Recession. Still, Zentner also expects the economy to start recovering by the second half of the year.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Infection number nears 500,000

Associated Press

MADRID — The number of coronavirus infections closed in on a half-million worldwide Thursday, with Italy on track to surpass China.

Health care systems in Europe buckled under the strain, with Spain's death toll climbing to more than 4,000.

At least 2.8 billion people, or more than one-third of the Earth's population, are under severe travel restrictions. But the head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, scolded world leaders for wasting precious time in the fight against the virus that has already killed more than 22,000 people and infected over 480,000, thrown millions out of work and ravaged the world economy.

"The time to act was actually more than a month ago or two months ago," he said Wednesday. "We squandered the first window of opportunity. ... This is a second opportunity, which we should not squander and do everything to suppress and control this virus."

In Brazil, the country's governors are defying President Jair Bolsonaro over his call to reopen schools and businesses, dismissing his argument that the "cure" of widespread shutdowns is worse than the disease. As of Thursday, the country had more than 2,500 cases and 59 deaths.

Spain has become the country in Europe where the outbreak is spreading the fastest. On Thursday, the Health Ministry reported nearly 8,600 new infections and 655 deaths, bringing the total cases to over 56,000 and more than 4,000 fatalities — second only to Italy's death toll of about 7,500.

Health Minister Salvador Illa

sought to assure Spaniards that government measures to slow the virus were working, telling Parliament that the rises had been smaller than in previous days and "indicate a changing trend that brings us to think that we are entering a phase of stabilization."

In Italy, doctors and nurses begged the government to provide more masks, gloves and goggles and urged the public to understand how important onerous social distancing measures really are. Scientists say stopping just one person from getting the virus means scores of others will not become infected down the road.

"Help us help you," Dr. Francesca De Gennaro, who heads a small medical clinic in Italy's hard-hit Bergamo region, wrote in an open letter.

The rate of increase in Italy has slowed slightly, noted Dr. Hans Kluge, the head of the WHO's European office.

He said officials hope to soon figure out whether lockdown measures in numerous countries have worked.

Germany has had a high number of infections at more than 39,000 people, but just 222 deaths — which has widely been attributed to early and aggressive testing, among other factors.

On Thursday, Lothar Wieler, the head of Germany's Robert Koch disease control center, said the country now has the ability to test 500,000 people a week, perhaps the greatest capacity in the world.

European Union leaders were holding their third summit in three weeks on the virus to manage the havoc it is wreaking on their 27 economies. As the number of deaths in Europe soared



Bakers form round marble cakes wrapped in fondant that look like toilet paper rolls as a commentary on the toilet paper frenzy due to the coronavirus outbreak, in Dortmund, Germany, on Thursday.

MARTIN MEISSNER/AP



Italian soldiers and Carabinieri police block one of the roads leading to the small town of Nerola on Thursday.

MAURO SCORBONA, LAPRESSE/AP

past 12,000, Spain extended a state of emergency that will allow it to impose broader lockdowns, while French President Emmanuel Macron launched "Operation Resilience," a military-backed

response to the crisis.

France began evacuating infected citizens from the northeastern hotspot of Alsace using a special high-speed train.

Britain ordered 10,000 venti-

lators, working with engineers from Dyson. The government wants to increase its supply of the breathing machines from \$8,000 to 30,000.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

So far, more than 115,000 people have recovered from the virus, according to a running count kept by Johns Hopkins University.

China's cases have slowed, with only 67 new cases reported, all recent arrivals.

The leaders of the Group of 20 largest economies held a special video conference to better coordinate a response to the outbreak, amid criticism that the world's wealthiest countries have not taken cohesive action. The conference was chaired by Saudi Arabia's King Salman.

Iraq, Lebanon extend government restrictions on movement

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Iraq and Lebanon prepared Thursday to extend government-imposed restrictions on movement for two more weeks, the latest measures announced to stem the spread of the coronavirus. In Iran, the death toll jumped by 157 new fatalities, prompting new steps to limit public gatherings and domestic travel.

In Saudi Arabia, authorities announced a total lockdown on the capital, Riyadh, and Islam's two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina, in addition to a nationwide curfew. In the United Arab Emirates, authorities announced an overnight weekend lockdown and used drones to tell residents to stay home.

As countries in the region grapple with the fast-spreading virus, leaders of the world's most powerful economies were to convene virtually in an effort to coordinate a response.

The meeting for the Group of 20 nations will be chaired by Saudi Arabia's King

Salman and comes amid criticism that the world's wealthiest countries have not taken cohesive action to combat the outbreak, which has shuttered businesses and forced well over a quarter of the world's population into home isolation.

Iraq's Health Ministry reported a jump of coronavirus-related deaths by seven in 24 hours, according to a statement on Thursday, the highest since the government began recording cases. At least 36 people among 382 confirmed infected cases have died.

Iraqis have struggled to adhere to the daylong curfew in place since March 17, prompting senior Iraqi officials and prominent religious figures to call for the public to stay at home and avoid congregating in public. Iraq's Cabinet declared Thursday it would extend the curfew until April 11, the second extension since the curfew was first imposed.

Health officials said they expect numbers to rise as more are tested in the coming weeks. An Iraqi army statement said

it would send units to enforce a weeks-long curfew to stem the spread of the virus, and even cord off areas where cases were mounting. The provinces of Baghdad, Basra and Karbala saw the highest number of new cases, according to the ministry.

In Iran, which is facing the worst outbreak in the region, the death toll rose to 2,234 on Thursday with 157 new fatalities, according to the health ministry. There are more than 29,000 confirmed cases in Iran, where authorities have advised people to stay home but refrained from imposing nationwide movement restrictions or curfews as seen elsewhere.

However, President Hassan Rouhani said Thursday that the government will apply more travel and gathering restrictions for the next two weeks to "break the chain" of the virus, and announced an aid package to support struggling businesses. The new restrictions will include a ban on domestic travel by road and public gatherings, the closure of all public parks and points of meetings, according to Deputy

Interior Minister Hossein Zolfaghari who spoke on state TV.

Zolfaghari said authorities will punish shops that remain open with a one-month forced closure. Pharmacies, groceries and bakeries are exempt.

In Saudi Arabia, the lockdown of Riyadh, Mecca and Medina, include a 15-hour curfew starting at 3 p.m. The rest of the kingdom has 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew. King Salman ordered the latest restrictions and announced them on Wednesday.

Saudi Arabia has 1012 confirmed infected cases and four deaths from COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus.

In the UAE, malls, airports and beaches have already been closed, and authorities said a weekend overnight curfew would begin Thursday at 8 p.m., lasting till 6 a.m. Buses, trams and the metro will be suspended over the weekend so they could be disinfected. Police in Dubai and the nearby emirate of Sharjah were using drones to tell people to stay indoors.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Charities face growing need without volunteers

Associated Press

For more than a week, Elaine Peoples, who cooked for a now-shuttered day care center, has been out of work. At 68, she's also at a higher risk for catching the new coronavirus. Nonetheless, she's showing up four days a week for her volunteer shift at an increasingly crowded Brooklyn soup kitchen and food pantry.

"Volunteering is vital," said Peoples, who herself is experiencing financial strain. "Everything I get goes to bills. My budget is stretched to the limit. There is no extra."

These days, low-income families still need food. Homeless people still need beds. And those puppies in the animal shelter still need walks.

For decades, American nonprofits have relied on a cadre of volunteers who — quite suddenly — aren't able to show up. With millions staying home during the pandemic, charities that help the country's neediest are finding themselves in need.

"This is a time when we do need everybody pulling together to help us out," said Leslie Bacho, CEO of Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, one of the nation's largest food banks.

Many Americans have now been ordered to stay inside their homes, although there are exceptions for people providing essential services, and, in orders reviewed by The Associated Press, that includes volunteering at food banks.

Nonetheless, Bacho said that half of the bank's volunteers — the equivalent of 107 full-time staffers — aren't showing up. This means that as more people need food, there's less ability to get it to them.

"Volunteers are needed the most in times of crisis," said Dr. Grover Gilmore, dean of Case Western's school of social sciences. "This is simply another exam-



WONG MAY-E/AP

Surrounded by a few volunteers, a man carries food donations from St. Stephen Outreach in the Brooklyn borough of New York on Friday.

ple, and an extreme example, of everyone needing to help as best they can."

One out of four Americans volunteers, performing an estimated 8 billion hours a year of service. The most common work? Collecting, preparing, distributing or serving food, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Kathryn Strickland, chief network officer for Feeding America, the nation's largest organization of food banks, with some 200 said that the group has seen a "sharp decline" in volunteers across the country, and is asking for new volunteers and scrambling to hire additional staff for pay.

Sheila Williams usually has 25 volunteers to feed about 100 people a day at St. Stephen Outreach in Brooklyn.

Now she's down to just 10, including Peoples, with lines out

the door, more people than she's ever seen.

"Folks that don't normally come are coming," she said, after digging out countless plates of franks, rice, beans and fruit. "They've lost their job, there's nothing in the supermarket."

José Rosa, 63, comes to the soup kitchen once a week. He lives in a homeless shelter and said he doesn't get enough to eat there.

"It keeps me healthy, it keeps food in my stomach," he said of his trips to St. Stephen. Without it, he said, "I'd go hungry."

In Silicon Valley, some 10,000 homeless people are in a terribly vulnerable situation, said Jennifer Loving, CEO of Destination: Home, a public-private partnership that addresses homelessness. Public health experts have warned that people living in tents or under tarps have less access to

soap and water and are more exposed to disease and violence.

"Further, many others, like intake and shelter workers and food delivery workers, are some of our lowest paid residents and are now called to the front lines," she said. "We must do everything we can to protect these heroes from further economic and health peril."

Food banks are also largely canceling soup kitchens to avoid close contact that can spread the virus. Instead, they're planning to drop boxes of food into people's trunks at drive-thru stations.

In Seattle, the initial epicenter of the U.S. outbreak, Food Lifeline is struggling. It relies on roughly 18,000 volunteers every year to collect and sort food donations, package boxes and deliver goods. The organization is now telling all but a small core group of volunteers to stay home.

"We can't take those food donations because we can't sort and repack them," Mark Coleman said. Instead, they're buying prepackaged food that doesn't require sorting, at roughly \$30 per box. All of this is happening as they expect demand for their services to double, Coleman said. Before the crisis, they packaged 72,000 boxes a month.

"It's really tough. The stock market crash in 2008 was tough, but nothing like this," he said.

Joe Burns, 69, is among just 20 volunteers still pitching in at Food Lifeline. For the past four years, he's come four days a week to sort apples, oranges and other fresh fruits and vegetables. That won't change, he said.

"People are getting laid off left and right, going on unemployment and very soon aren't going to have any means for buying groceries," he said. "There's a need right now, so you just gotta step up to the plate."

It's not just food banks whose volunteer workforce has dwindled.

Laura Condouris, 38, a graphic designer, continued to show up for her weekly shift at the Maryland Society for the Prevention of the Cruelty to Animals in Baltimore until it closed on Monday. But even then her work wasn't over. That night, Condouris brought a mutt named Roxie, who'd been staying at another shelter, to a new foster home.

"The volunteers who are usually there on weekdays are retirees and older people," Condouris said. "Some of the people I normally see there can and should be staying home, so I've got to pick up the slack."

While the humans were hustling, Roxie, whose muzzle is white and whose left ear sags, seemed unperturbed by her move.

Veterinarians donate vital supplies to fight against coronavirus

By ALLEN G. BREED
Associated Press

RALEIGH, NC — Veterinary hospitals are donating breathing machines, masks, gowns and other vital equipment and supplies purchased with Fido in mind, but now being redeployed to help doctors fight the spread of COVID-19 among humans.

"We buy at the same stores," said Paul Lunn, dean of the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, which, on Monday, turned over two full-service ventilators, 500 protective suits and 950 masks for use in area hospitals. "There's no difference in the equipment."

In response to a call last week by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue for materials to combat the pandemic, vets schools from North Carolina to Colorado

'While that may not seem like a lot, if it's, you know, your grandmother, spouse that gets that ventilator, we're hoping it can save a life.'

Dr. Virginia Sinnott-Stutzman
Boston's Angell Animal Medical Center

to New York are stepping up.

There are 30 fully accredited veterinary medical schools in 26 states, according to the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. Of those, 27 have veterinary teaching hospitals with comprehensive services treating everything from pet cats and dogs to horses and other large animals. Lunn said that the schools have identified over 72 ventilators that could be commandeered for human treatment.

The 2009 outbreak of H1N1

influenza had veterinarians readying to help in this kind of emergency, he added: "This isn't the first time we've prepared for this, although it's the first time in my personal experience that we've actually had to pull the trigger."

Private institutions are also heeding the call.

Dr. Virginia Sinnott-Stutzman, chair of the Infection Control Committee at Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston, said that members of the Veterinary

Emergency and Critical Care Society have identified about 100 full-service ventilators which can provide long-term breathing support. She said that there are also hundreds more relatively simple anesthesia ventilators "basically like an automated hand squeezing a bag ... to get air into the patient." Nationwide that could be pressed into service. It only amounts to just a dent in the overall need, however, with officials saying that tens of thousands of ventilators are needed in New York alone.

"While that may not seem like a lot, if it's, you know, your grandmother, spouse that gets that ventilator, we're hoping it can save a life," she said.

Experts have said that there is no evidence that household pets can contract the disease.

The Colorado State University vet school delivered to Pouder

Valley Hospital in Fort Collins a breathing machine that was "brand new, right out of the box," professor Tim Hackett said. "We did not get a chance to use it."

And in New York, the hardest-hit place in the U.S., the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine has leased two full-service ventilators and a high-flow oxygen unit to a hospital in Manhattan. It is also preparing to send three full-service breathing machines and 19 of the smaller anesthesia ventilators to Cayuga Medical Center in Ithaca, where the vet school is located.

Dean Lorin Warnick, whose institution has also provided hundreds of respirator and surgical masks, and testing materials, said that the college is providing only essential emergency service to animal patients and following FDA guidelines on conserving protective equipment.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Prep school: Survivalists feeling vindicated

Once derided, some find their skills are in vogue

By JASON NARK
The Philadelphia Inquirer

RINGTOWN, Pa. — When Dan Wowak went to live alone in the wilds of Patagonia in 2016 for a chance to win a half-million dollars on reality television, he was allowed to bring 10 items. Toilet paper wasn't one of them.

Wowak, a Mahanoy City native, did bring an ax, saw, sleeping bag and a ferro rod, which you can strike to make sparks in just about any condition. He also chose fishing line and hooks, which proved invaluable. Over 51 days, he ate nothing but fish he caught in a lake; nine of them.

"I lost 54 pounds," he said. "I know what hunger feels like."

Wowak, who worked in the juvenile justice system before becoming a full-time woodsman, left the reality show "Alone" early, choosing sanity, food and his family over the big prize. Today, at age 38, he teaches survival and outdoors classes through his company, Coal Cracker Bushcraft, giving crash courses in how to stay alive in the woods or when goods are scarce. He said that he's recently gotten hundreds of emails expressing interest as America quickly went from normal to empty supermarket shelves. He's seen people making smart decisions, like social distancing, and bizarre ones, like grabbing all the toilet paper they can.

"You don't use toilet paper if you're out in the woods. Just grab some leaves and wipe your butt. At home, you can cut up old T-shirts," he said. "I think, honestly, a lot of people just don't know what to do. They see me buying toilet paper, they see you buying toilet paper and Uncle Frank, and they go looking for it."

Wowak, who earned an MBA from Alvernia University in Reading, Pa., defines essentials as shelter, water, fire and food. Translated to a city or suburban environment, that could be a house, heat sources like blankets and fireplaces, your faucet and extra cans of beans. If people remained calm and thought those needs out, he said, they'd find better alternatives at the store.

"I went to Target the other day and there was no water on the shelves," he said. "I went over to the camping aisle and all the water purifiers and jugs were there. You could literally boil a pot of water in the morning and at night."

Art Dawes, 51, of Lock Haven, runs PA Wilderness Skills, a business similar to Wowak's. He said that he took a survival class offered by his junior high school de-



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BRYANT/The Philadelphia Inquirer

Above: Survivalist Dan Wowak shows a yurt he constructed at his training camp outside Ringtown, Pa., and talks of the advantages it offers as a shelter in the wilderness. Wowak is a full-time woodsman who runs camps that teach survival skills and has a YouTube channel where he shares his expertise.

cades ago and has been hooked ever since. "We were starting fires on the front lawn of the school," he said.

Dawes said that people should use the coronavirus pandemic to make plans, to list out things they would take with them if they had to leave home. They should brush up on basic car repair too.

"You never know if your car is going to break down," he said.

Both woodsmen teach primitive skills to their students, such as making fire with a "bow drill," the way cavemen might have done. But they're also practical and carry tools that make lighting fire far easier.

"There's a reason why lighters were invented," Dawes said.

All across the country, people who identify as "preppers" have spent years stockpiling food and ammunition for disaster scenarios, and many feel vindicated as the coronavirus and efforts to stop it spread. They've often been ridiculed or called paranoid, but they have said that many of their critics are now asking for their help, including whether they can spare some of their surplus if times get tough.



Wowak scrapes downward on a ferro rod, creating a very hot, glowing spark that ignites the dry grass he has piled on the ground to make a fire.

You don't use toilet paper if you're out in the woods. Just grab some leaves and wipe your butt. At home, you can cut up old T-shirts. ♦

Dan Wowak
Survivalist

One administrator for a Facebook prep- per group said that he's been adding 2,000 members per week.

"The only story we want to tell is that everyone, every member of a community, should learn the basics of survival not only for themselves, but for their communities," he said in a message.

Wowak and Dawes do not consider themselves "preppers," as both prefer to be called woodsmen who practice bushcraft. Wowak said that he uses firearms for hunting, but believes that trapping is more practical when looking for food.

Some Pennsylvania preppers agree to speak to The Philadelphia Inquirer, but none would divulge their full names out of concern that their locations would be uncovered. Many declined to be interviewed, saying that "the media" perpetuated the "prepper" stereotype.

Robert B., 40, of Lebanon County, said that he and his daughters have "bug out bags" packed in case they have to leave the house immediately. He owns 45 acres "elsewhere." Bug out bags usually contain essentials like extra medicine, sleeping gear, tools, lighters and more.

"We have prepped for different scenarios, from home invasions to mass rioting and pandemics to possible war," Robert B. said.

None of the preppers could think of a specific event that caused them to start stockpiling.

"I guess growing up in extreme poverty

and seeing how one bad day can turn into a major problem easily," said Michelle, 44, from Centre County.

Many said that the reaction to the coronavirus — massive layoffs, scarcity of food and goods, relaxed law enforcement for certain crimes — could be as bad as the virus itself, which might explain the uptick in gun and ammunition sales. A gun store owner in Montgomery County told The Inquirer last week that he could not order more ammunition. When asked if he had firearms, prepper Jon K., of Erie County, said, "Use your imagination."

The most important aspect of prepping, in Jon K.'s opinion, is preserving water and food, either through drying or canning. Michelle has a greenhouse and root cellar at her home.

Wowak and Dawes agreed that in a survival scenario, finding food is the most critical and difficult task. Buying milk and fresh meat is thinking very much in the present, Wowak said, but when shopping for a protracted quarantine, look for canned foods, protein bars, nuts and even pasta — high-caloric foods that can last.

In nature, Wowak said, smaller foods like blueberries or frogs are easiest to eat, but low in calories. Large sources of protein like deer or turkey are more complicated, even with a fire.

"If you were able to kill a deer and it was 70 degrees out, would you be able to preserve it?" Wowak said.

Both men have told their students to avoid eating plants unless they're really skilled at identifying them. Many can make you sick or worse. Dawes suggested buying field guides to edible plants.

Wowak said that a lot of strategies perpetuated by film and television aren't quite practical in a true survival situation — like roasting a fish on an open fire and simply eating the fillets. He prefers to boil them whole and basically consume everything but the bones to get every calorie.

"Even the fish heads," he said. "The eyeballs kind of liquefy."

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

New York continues to struggle as overall US deaths increase

Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York authorities mobilized to head off a public health disaster Wednesday, with the city's emergence as the nation's biggest coronavirus hot spot a warning flare — and perhaps a cautionary tale — for the rest of the country as U.S. deaths from the pandemic topped 1,000.

A makeshift morgue was set up outside Bellevue Hospital, and the city's police, their ranks swelling as more fall ill, were told to patrol nearly empty streets to enforce social distancing.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, again pleading for help in dealing with the onslaught, attributed the cluster to the city's role as a gateway to international travelers and the sheer density of its population, with 8.6 million people sharing subways, elevators, apartment buildings and offices.

"Our closeness makes us vulnerable," he said. "But it's true that your greatest weakness is also your greatest strength. And our closeness is what makes us who we are. That is what New York is."

Alabama

MONTGOMERY — Alabama on Wednesday reported its first coronavirus death as the total number of confirmed cases in the state reached nearly 400, officials said.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey and the Alabama Department of Public Health confirmed that the Jackson County resident died from the COVID-19 disease. The governor said that she extends "my prayers and deepest sympathies to the family and loved ones during these extraordinary circumstances."

"I continue to urge everyone that this virus is real, it is deadly, and we should continue to maintain social distancing as much as possible. Together, we will overcome these challenges and difficult days," Ivey said.

The patient had underlying health problems and passed away in a facility outside the state of Alabama, the Health Department said. The Jackson County Commission said that the person was a part-time employee at the county courthouse, and they are having the area cleaned before employees return to work.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Officials from Arizona's health department and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spent hours Wednesday scouring a shuttered Phoenix hospital to see how quickly it could be running if an expected surge of coronavirus cases hits.

The state is looking to reopen two closed Phoenix hospitals and convert a specialty hospital. The review of the closed St. Luke's Medical Center is part of an effort to nearly double hospital ca-

pacity from the current 16,900 to the nearly 30,000 officials said might be needed by May.

The quickest way to boost capacity is if existing hospitals convert other areas to patient care, something that they are already planning to do. Hospitals are ready to convert recovery rooms, unused surgical suites and other areas to boost capacity.

"Even if they can do that by 50%, that would be another 8,000 beds potentially and another 700 ICU beds," Health Services Department Director Dr. Cara Christ said. The state currently has about 1,500 intensive care unit beds.

Maryland

ANNAPOLIS — The Maryland Board of Elections is planning to do away with polling stations for the state's already delayed primary. Voters would instead be required to mail in or drop off their ballots in an effort to limit coronavirus infections.

If approved, the move would eliminate any need for Maryland's more than 4 million registered voters to cast their ballots in person on June 2, according to a draft presented by elections officials at their Wednesday meeting, held by teleconference.

The board, citing advice from health officials, said that it could not guarantee poll workers the gear necessary to protect them against exposure to the virus, The Baltimore Sun reported.

Ballots, with clear instructions explaining how to return them, would likely need to be mailed to all registered voters by the end of April, Nikki Charlson, deputy administrator for the Board of Elections, said during the meeting. Those ballots would include prepaid postage to be sent through the mail, or they could be dropped off in boxes at locations that weren't yet specified, The Sun said.

Michigan

DETROIT — Michigan hospitals braced Wednesday for a surge of coronavirus cases, as the number of cases in the state rose to at least 2,294 and the number of deaths nearly doubled, from 24 to 43. Most of the cases — 85% — were reported in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, but more than half of the state's 83 counties have been affected.

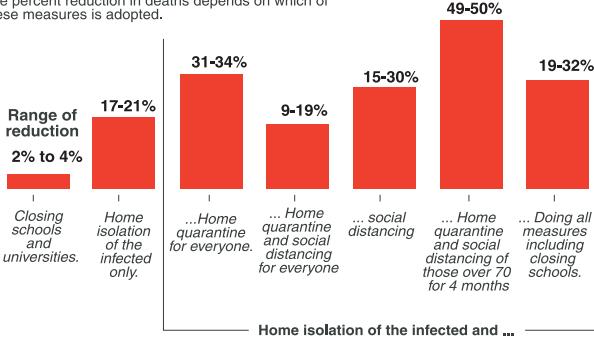
Beaumont Health and Henry Ford Health System in southeastern Michigan said that they were caring for more than 1,000 COVID-19 patients at their 13 hospitals. Operating rooms were being converted into intensive care units and clinics had been turned into rooms for patients needing other medical care.

"The numbers are changing and increasing even in two-hour intervals," said Bob Riney, chief operating officer at Henry Ford, whose flagship hospital is in Detroit.

How effective is staying home or closing schools?

The answer can vary greatly from country to country, region to region. One recent study out of England attempted to gauge the measures that could impact people over 70, and found that the effectiveness of these ranged depending on how many people are infected and how easily the disease spreads.

The percent reduction in deaths depends on which of these measures is adopted.



Home isolation of the infected and ...

Updates on the military and the coronavirus are at stripes.com/coronavirus

SOURCES: COVID-19 Response Team at the Imperial College

ANDREA VILLARI/Stars and Stripes

Dr. Betty Chu, of Henry Ford, predicted an "upcoming surge."

Beaumont chief executive John Fox called on the state to invoke its power to balance care across eight regions in the state.

In western Michigan, where cases so far remain relatively lower, Grand Rapids-based Spectrum Health said that it has room if the region gets a burst of patients.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — A 524-bed Catholic Charities homeless shelter in Las Vegas closed and health officials began screening untold numbers of people who used it and a nearby city relief facility after a homeless person was diagnosed with the new coronavirus, health officials said Wednesday.

The Southern Nevada Health District said that the closure was prompted by a discovery that a man who used it and the nearby city Homeless Courtyard services center had COVID-19 but had recovered. He was no longer considered a risk to others, officials said.

City officials, who recently passed laws banning sleeping on public thoroughfares, closed a road off Las Vegas Boulevard to make room for up to 750 displaced homeless people to spend the night.

In Reno, the city's downtown Events Center is serving as a temporary shelter for up to 400 homeless people displaced by closure of that city's largest shelters because they couldn't meet social distancing requirements ordered by Gov. Steve Sisolak.

Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Gov. Tom Wolf's administration reported more coronavirus-related deaths in Pennsylvania on Wednesday and ordered residents of Lehigh

and Northampton counties to stay home, with few exceptions, as more of the state is put under the directive in an effort to slow the virus' spread. The two counties are home to more than 670,000 people.

Before Wednesday, Wolf's orders covered eight counties, including Philadelphia, Allegheny County and Philadelphia's four heavily populated suburban counties. The 10 counties account for half of Pennsylvania's 12.8 million residents and are home to nearly 80% of the state's confirmed coronavirus cases, as of Wednesday.

In a video news conference Wednesday, Wolf stressed that business owners and their employees have borne a huge brunt of the shutdowns, and urged residents to "step up" and do their part to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Everyone "must all act as if we have it" to avoid spreading it further, he said.

Still, Wolf has resisted offering any sort of projection for when he thinks the state could start getting back to normal.

"We're going to recover from this crisis, but first we must get through it," Wolf said.

Texas

AUSTIN — Planned Parenthood joined other abortion providers Wednesday in suing Texas over moving to ban abortions during the coronavirus outbreak, including one clinic owner saying that Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's recent order has already resulted in more than 150 concealed appointments.

The federal lawsuit filed in Austin, Texas, is among the most high-profile challenges to a government response to the coronavirus pandemic. Abortion providers accused Republican leaders in Texas of exploiting the

pandemic for politics after Abbott on Sunday halted nonessential surgeries in order to free up medical supplies to fight COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

That was followed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Republican, saying that the order banned "any type of abortion that is not medically necessary to preserve the life or health of the mother."

"Abortion is essential health care, and it is a time-sensitive service," said Amy Hagstrom Miller, president of Whole Woman's Health. She said that the 150-plus cancellations across her three clinics in Texas left some women "begging" for the abortion they needed."

West Virginia

CHARLESTON — A West Virginia nursing home with at least 20 coronavirus cases has become "ground zero" for the state's growing caseload, officials said Wednesday.

Carl Shrader, medical director for the Sundale nursing home in Morgantown, said that 16 residents and four staffers have tested positive for the virus. Seventy-six tests were pending, he said.

"This is ground zero for COVID-19 in West Virginia, and I'm sitting in it," Shrader told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

West Virginia's total cases have hit at least 52, with the largest number in Monongalia County, where the nursing home is located. The grim tally at Sundale also came on a day when officials moved to extend tax deadlines and the statewide school closures.

The state has yet to register a death due to the coronavirus. But testing remains limited, meaning most people now spreading the highly contagious virus may not know that they've been infected.

WORLD

New Zealand mosque gunman pleads guilty

BY NICK PERRY
Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — The man who committed the worst atrocity in New Zealand's modern history when he slaughtered 51 worshippers at two Christchurch mosques unexpectedly pleaded guilty to all charges Thursday.

The attacks targeting people praying at the mosques a year ago shocked the nation and prompted new laws banning the deadliest types of semi-automatic weapons. It also prompted global changes to social media protocols after the gunman livestreamed his attack on Facebook, where it was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people.

The sudden turn in the case took survivors and relatives by surprise and brought relief to people across New Zealand. Many had feared Australian white supremacist Brenton Harrison Tarrant would try to use his trial as a platform to promote his views. He'd outlined those views in a 74-page manifesto he published online shortly before the attacks.

Tarrant, 29, pleaded guilty to 51 counts of murder, 40 counts of attempted murder and one count of terrorism at the Christchurch High Court. He had previously pleaded not guilty to all charges and his trial had been scheduled to start in June.

Tarrant is the first person to be found guilty of terrorism in New Zealand under laws passed after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the U.S.

The change in plea came less than two weeks after New Zealanders commemorated those who died on the anniversary of the March 15, 2019, attacks.

"Honestly, I'm still trying to process what just happened," said Aya Al-Umari, whose brother Hussein was killed in the attack

on the Al Noor mosque. "I feel conflicted."

She said that on the one hand, she had wanted to find out more details about what happened at the trial but on the other hand was feeling relieved about not having to face the trauma of sitting through it.

Temel Atacogucu, who was being shot nine times during the attack at Al Noor, said he was surprised by the turn of events and hoped the judge would set an example at the sentencing by imposing the harshest punishment in the country's history and helping ensure nothing like it would happen again.

Judge Cameron Mander has not yet set a sentencing date. Tarrant faces life imprisonment, with the judge having some discretion in deciding the minimum number of years Tarrant must serve before becoming eligible for parole.

The change in plea came at a hastily arranged court hearing at a time that New Zealand was beginning a four-week lockdown to try and combat the new coronavirus. The lockdown meant Tarrant appeared in the court via video link from his jail cell in Auckland and only a handful of people were allowed inside the courtroom, including the imams from the two mosques that were attacked.

Mander said it was unfortunate the lockdown prevented victims and family members from being able to attend the hearing but the imams were helping to represent them. He said he wanted to quickly move ahead with the hearing, especially with the COVID-19 response threatening delays to the court schedule.

Tarrant, who was wearing a gray prison sweater, showed little emotion as he pleaded guilty. He didn't indicate why he had changed his pleas, and his lawyer could not immediately be reached for comment.



SYLVAIN CHERKAOUI/AP

Informative art

A member of the Senegalese graffiti collective "RBS CREW" paints informational murals advising how to stop the spread of the new coronavirus, on the wall of a high school in the Parcelles Assainies neighborhood of the capital Dakar, Senegal, on Wednesday.

South Korea identifies suspected leader of sexual blackmail ring

BY MIN JOO KIM
The Washington Post

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korean police took the rare step of identifying and parading the suspected leader of a sexual blackmail ring in front of the press and protesters on Wednesday after the case triggered a national uproar.

The police asked prosecutors on Wednesday to indict Cho Joo-bin, 24, for allegedly blackmailing at least 74 women, including 16 minors, into producing sexually degrading videos of themselves, and then posting in pay-to-view chat rooms.

The allegations prompted a national outcry in South Korea over a growing spate of online postings of illegal sexual images obtained through blackmail or filmed secretly — a practice that critics say is aggravated by lack of respect for women and weak laws and penalties.

More than 1.8 million people signed a petition asking the presidential Blue House to release the identities of members of a group-chat network where the videos had been posted. Local media said the network had 260,000 people, but police said some were double-counted and that others were not paying members.

Another petition calling for the man to be publicly paraded in a public walk attracted more than 2.5 million signatures since his arrest last week. The National Police Agency said it decided to publicly release Cho's identity in hopes of deterring similar offenses. It cited "his malicious and repetitive criminal method that forced sexually abusive videos out of women whom he labeled slaves."

"We decided to release his name, age and face after reviewing how it would serve the public interest regarding the people's right to know and the prevention

of similar crimes from recurring," the agency said Tuesday.

Law enforcement authorities in South Korea usually refrain from personally identifying suspects on grounds of privacy rights and possible impacts on their family members.

Cho appeared in handcuffs Wednesday outside a Seoul police office, where he was faced by a swarm of reporters and protesters before being transported to the prosecutor's office.

"Thank you for stopping the life of a demon that could not stop," Cho said as he was escorted away as cameras flashed and protesters shouted. He apologized to "all the people who have been hurt by me," but he did not answer questions about the accusations.

President Moon Jae-in on Monday ordered a thorough investigation of all operators and members of the chat-room network, calling it a "cruelty that destroys a person's life."

Family: US government believes ex-FBI agent Robert Levinson has died

BY ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. government has concluded that FBI agent Robert Levinson, who vanished more than a decade ago, died while in the custody of Iran, his family and administration officials said Wednesday.

The circumstances and timing of Levinson's death were unclear, but White House national security adviser Robert O'Brien

said Wednesday evening that the U.S. believes Levinson "may have passed away some time ago." Hours earlier, his family said information U.S. officials had received had led them to conclude he was dead. Neither the government nor the family described that information.

The death is believed to have occurred before the recent outbreak of the coronavirus that has gravely affected Iran and other countries, according to a state Department from Levinson's family. The person said the information

The government's acknowledgement of Levinson's death came hours after a White House briefing in which President Donald Trump appeared to equivocate on the news, saying, "I won't accept that he's dead."

U.S. officials communicated the news to Levinson's family in a meeting in Washington in recent weeks, according to a person familiar with the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private encounter. The person said the information

about Levinson had come from Iran's foreign minister.

"It is impossible to describe our pain," the family's statement said. "Our family will spend the rest of our lives without the most amazing man, a new reality that is inconceivable to us. His grandchildren will never meet him."

Levinson disappeared on March 9, 2007, when he was scheduled to meet a source on the Iranian island of Kish. For years, U.S. officials would say only that Levinson was working indepen-

dently on a private investigation. But a 2013 Associated Press investigation revealed that Levinson had been sent on a mission by CIA analysts who had no authority to run such an operation.

The family statement also said: "Those who are responsible for what happened to Bob Levinson, including those in the U.S. government who for many years repeatedly left him behind, will ultimately receive justice for what they have done."

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The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration is a program administered by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The U.S. began commemoration of the Vietnam War's 50th anniversary in 2012 and will continue through Veterans Day 2025.

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- Former Prisoners of War
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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Squirrel sparks power loss near mansion

AK JUNEAU — An squirrel knocked out power to residences near the state governor's mansion, Alaska electric company officials said.

The squirrel was interfering with equipment when the temporary loss of electrical service happened in Juneau on Monday, The Juneau Empire reported.

"Our crews were on site very quickly, and found it not alive," said Debbie Driscoll, Alaska Electric Light and Power vice president of consumer affairs.

The squirrel generated a problem with fuses and sparked the power outage experienced by 15 customers.

Police: Another truck damages covered bridge

VT LYNDON — Another truck has damaged a historic covered bridge in northern Vermont that had been closed for months for repairs last spring after it was hit by a produce truck, police said.

The Miller's Run Covered Bridge in Lyndon was damaged at both ends early Monday by a tractor-trailer and closed to traffic for several hours, the Caledonian Record reported.

The truck driven from Laval, Quebec, did not stop after hitting the bridge's facade with the top of trailer, police said. Police Chief Jack Harris said he later found the truck in Lyndonville as the driver was waiting to make a delivery. The driver was issued a ticket and a \$12,295 fine for being 71,000 pounds overweight on the bridge.

The bridge reopened later in the day after the town crew made some repairs but more extensive work is necessary, Lyndon Town Administrator Justin Smith said.

New Veterans Memorial Park planned

NM TAOS — Volunteers and veterans are helping lead an effort to build a new Veterans Memorial Park in Taos.

The Albuquerque Journal reported the nonprofit group Not Forgotten Outreach Inc. is taking the lead in a coalition that plans to begin work this spring.

Earlier this year, the nonprofit received a \$23,000 grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeves Foundation. The grant will underwrite the construction of an Americans with Disabilities Accessible walking trail crossing over a spring-fed drainage waterway.

Taos County has a population of more than 3,000 veterans.

Woman wins bigger Lottery prize this time

MO ST. LOUIS — A St. Louis woman who won \$50,000 in a Lottery game 18 years ago has won again, and this time the prize is much bigger.

The Missouri Lottery said Wednesday that Anna Kasal matched all six numbers in the



CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Cruising past the boats

A runner makes her way along the Davis Islands Yacht Basin on a beautiful spring day Wednesday in Tampa, Fla.

March 11 drawing to win a \$3 million jackpot. The winning numbers were 11, 16, 23, 26, 31 and 38. Kasal won the \$50,000 prize in 2002.

Postal worker accused of running over woman

GA WOODSTOCK — A U.S. postal worker was in custody Tuesday and accused of running over a woman in Georgia with her mail truck and lying about it.

The Cherokee Sheriff's Office said Jaynie Underwood, 38, of Acworth, was arrested on charges of improper backing, failure to exercise due care and giving false statements to authorities about the incident, which happened March 18.

According to the sheriff's office, Underwood told deputies Barbara Daniels, 60, of Woodstock, was standing in grass near her mailbox as she passed by. She said when she looked back, Daniels was lying in the road. Deputies asked if her truck hit Daniels, but she said it had not.

Investigators later found camera footage that shows the truck backing up and hitting Daniels, who is being treated at an area hospital for a serious head injury

FBI agent charged with stalking ex-girlfriend

NV HELENA — A Montana FBI agent has arrested a 62-year-old arson suspect accused of starting five fires in trash cans and dumpsters in less than an

THE CENSUS

350K

The number of illegal prescriptions a south Georgia pharmacy gave out, authorities said. Chip's Discount Drugs in Hazlehurst and pharmacist Rogers "Chip" Wood Jr. settled on a federal lawsuit and agreed to pay over \$2 million in fines, U.S. Attorney Bobby L. Christine said Tuesday in a news release. According to the lawsuit, the pharmacy dispensed thousands of illegal prescriptions for opioids and other substances written by Dr. Frank Bynes Jr. over the course of two years. Bynes was sentenced in February to 20 years in federal prison.

ex-girlfriend and obstructing officers investigating the case.

Lewis and Clark County Sheriff Leo Dutton said Ricky James Shellbourn was arrested on the misdemeanor charges on March 16, the Independent Record reported Monday.

Shellbourn, the supervisory senior resident agent in Montana, was released on his own recognizance. He is not allowed to possess or have access to any firearms.

The FBI branch did not immediately respond to calls.

An arrest affidavit by the Montana Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation said a woman described "substantial emotional distress" in 2019 after she ended an "intermittent, intimate relationship" of about three years.

Arson suspect charged in 5 trash bin fires

NV RENO — Reno police have arrested a 62-year-old arson suspect accused of starting five fires in trash cans and dumpsters in less than an

hour, including one that damaged a downtown motel.

Morris Snead was booked into the Washoe County Jail on Monday on seven counts of third-degree arson.

Police say they received reports of five small fires downtown on Monday between 3:30 a.m. and 4 a.m. One forced the evacuation of a motel and caused damage to the building.

Police say Snead was arrested shortly after he was identified through surveillance video.

Police: 2 men stole over \$380K in equipment

NJ HAMILTON — Two men have been arrested after hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of landscaping equipment was stolen, police in New Jersey said.

According to Hamilton Police, Clint Riley, 39, and Kevin Cedeno-Ruiz, 24, stole equipment worth more than \$380,000 over the span of a year, NJ Advance Media reported.

Riley and Cedeno-Ruiz, both

of Trenton, allegedly sold the leaf blowers, lawnmowers, edgers and weed whackers on Facebook Marketplace and in person.

Police executed a search warrant Thursday on a farm owned by Riley in Hamilton where he stored some of the stolen property, authorities say.

Deputies seize cocaine worth estimated \$3.5M

NC DURHAM — Deputies in North Carolina say they've seized cocaine worth an estimated \$3.5 million from a storage locker and related searches.

A news release Monday from the Durham County Sheriff's Office said the busts that netted 35 pounds of uncut cocaine were coordinated with the Craven County Sheriff's Office and state and federal investigators.

Authorities said that the seizure was preceded by a tip in Craven County that led to a traffic stop on March 19. Information gleaned from that traffic stop led Durham County deputies using a search dog to a storage locker where they found most of the cocaine.

In Craven County, deputies seized a smaller quantity of cocaine, firearms and \$175,000 in cash. Two men were charged, including one man in Greensboro who authorities described as a major trafficker.

From wire reports

WEEKEND

home, BUT NOT ALONE

Use tech to keep loneliness
at bay by hosting virtual
dinner parties, game nights

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WEEKEND: MOVIES



iStock

Infectious entertainment

What postapocalyptic movies can teach about coping with coronavirus pandemic

By CRYSTAL PAUL
The Seattle Times

It starts with a cough ...

The screen is black and all you hear is the sound of Gwyneth Paltrow gently coughing. That's how director Steven Soderbergh's 2011 film "Contagion" begins.

Before you know it, a deadly virus is spreading, people all over the world are dying or desperate, society as we know it breaks down, humanity turns selfish and cruel, and the heroes of the virus apocalyptic spring into dramatic, adrenaline-in-ducing action.



That's essentially the recipe for most pandemic-apocalypse films.

Of course, it's not a less sophisticated film than "Contagion," like the 1995 film "Outbreak," then it starts with a series of very unlikely blunders, bad intentions, a touch of xenophobia and maybe even a government cover-up, before (spoiler alert) the world is saved by Dustin Hoffman winning a game of chicken between a helicopter and a bomb-wielding plane.

But, you get the idea.

As stocks dive, businesses and schools close, major events are canceled and local governments urge residents to stay at home due to the spread of the new coronavirus, it can start to feel like we're living in our own pandemic-wrought end of days.

While I 100% do not recommend

watching "Contagion" at a time like this (it strikes way too close to home!), I did.

As the coronavirus pandemic spreads and everyday slices of life begin to resemble scenes from postapocalyptic movies, I watched several popular apocalyptic pandemic films to see how the stories we put on screen compare to our real-life fears, hopes and reactions to these kinds of crises.

Eight movies and more than 16 hours later, here's what I've learned from the experience. ... It's a sunnier picture than you might imagine.

Our fears

What are we really afraid of?

From a cursory look at pandemic movies like "28 Days Later" or "World War Z," you'd think the answer is simple — we just

really don't want to be eaten alive by ugly, gnarly fleshed, fast-running zombies.

I mean, yeah, that would suck. Of course, no one realistically believes the dead will rise with a rabid craving for human flesh.

With more realistic pandemic films like "Contagion," which don't rely on ugly monsters to scare us, we see how terrifying a virus can be all on its own. Throughout the film, the camera focuses in on all of the mundane, everyday behaviors we engage in that, in the hands of a viral infection, become deadly. These are otherwise harmless actions we all take hundreds or even thousands of times a day: touching our faces, greeting each other with a handshake, taking a credit card from a customer, holding onto the rail on the bus;

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

5 movies about pandemics to watch (or avoid) if you're stuck at home

'The Omega Man' (1971)

The bug: Something cooked up by the Commies makes you clutch your throat and fall over on the spot.

Scary part:

Lots of creepy moments. The onset of the disease is brisk but harrowing. The empty world is eerie, the plague survivor implacable.

'The Andromeda Strain' (1971)

The bug: A microscopic speck of silicon-based green goop that kills instantly by making all your blood clot.

Scary part:

The entire movie thrums with dread and spiky, twitchy fear, in part thanks to the use of Gil Mille's eerie electronic score. The discovery of the bug remains one of the great unnerving moments of sci-fi. The worst moment might be a test on the effect of the germ

on a lab monkey. The viewer had no doubt that they'd just seen a creature die. Right there. On the screen, with pitiless clinical observation. No germ movie has ever felt as real as that moment. (P.S.: The monkey didn't really die.)

'Outbreak' (1995)

The bug: It's called Mataba, but it's your basic Ebola.

"Viral hemorrhagic fever" was all the rage in the mid-'90s, thanks to a book called "The Hot Zone," an account of Ebola that terrified readers in 1994. In this fictional version, someone smuggles an African monkey into America, producing an outbreak in a fictional town whose population is drawn from L.L. Bean catalogs. Dr. Dustin Hoffman has to work with his ex-wife, Dr. Rene Russo, to stop evil Gen. Donald Sutherland from using the germ as a weapon.

Scary part: It's no fun to see Kevin Spacey bleed out of every orifice and convulse.

'Flu' (2003)

The bug: Take a guess. From the earnest upright emergency-response

guy to the spunky gal scientist to the adorable child in peril, this South Korean movie about a lethal airborne virus in a large suburb within sneezing distance of Seoul is almost as clichéd as "The Andromeda Strain."

Just as American pandemic movies usually end up blaming the government, so does this. And just like American movies, this one blames the Yanks, too.

Scary part: The mean soldiers are going to shoot the little girl who's escaping the quarantine.

'Contagion' (2011)

The bug: The MEV-1, which could have been called the licky-split death bug.

With many parallels to the coronavirus scare, this is the movie people are renting. Directed by Steven Soderbergh, it's slow-burnning, disconnected, abrupt and full of dialogue that throws around medical jargon with no expectation that we'll know what anyone is talking about. It sketches societal collapse with deft, brisk moments. In short, it just ... keeps ... getting ... worse.

— James Lileks/Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Dustin Hoffman stars in "Outbreak"

Warner Bros.

WEEKEND: GADGETS

GADGET WATCH

Home office essentials

High- and low-tech gear help maximize productivity

By Gregg Ellman
Tribune News Service

Working from a home office is the normal, at least for now. So what better time to talk about some essential gadgets for your new home office to help maximize productivity?

Technology makes it easy to instantly join audio conferencing, but when your audio quality isn't great, efficiency and collaboration will go down the tube.

With the Samson Satellite USB/iOS broadcast-quality microphone, you get a lot of features, but the main two are the quality and its plug-and-play operation. It plugs directly into a Mac, PC, iPhone or iPad for conferencing calls, podcasting, gaming, VoIP, voice-over work and recording music.

The Satellite microphone (8.6-by-4.3-by-1.7 inches) sits on a desktop and is portable with folding back legs. Inside are two premium 16 mm condenser capsules for capturing audio. An internal shock-mount isolates the capsules from the body of the microphone to



The Samson Satellite USB/iOS broadcast quality microphone

minimize outside noise such as sounds caused by vibrations and table rumble.

Features include 24-bit/96kHz resolution and a flat frequency response of 20Hz–20kHz, zero-latency and a heavy-gauge steel mesh grille and an aluminum body. A monitor switch allows direct monitoring to be turned off, while you can still hear the audio back from your computer.

Online: [samsontech.com](http://samsontech.com;); \$99.99

Satechi's full extended compact backlit Bluetooth keyboard not only connects to your computer but will also connect two additional Bluetooth devices (computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.) simultaneously.

The keyboard features a full numeric keypad and MacOS shortcuts, and the illuminated backlit keys have 10 levels of brightness to easily adjust to changing light environments.

With Bluetooth 5.0, the keyboard connects to your device seamlessly and allows you to connect two more. This way,

you can have your computer, iPad and iPhone all connected at the same time. Obviously you won't want to type on all three devices at the same time, but the keyboard lets you toggle between devices.

It charges via USB-C for about 60 hours of use, which can vary depending on the backlight level used. It measures 14.5-by-4.7-by-0.4 inches with a space gray finish and black keys.

Online: satechinet.com; \$79.99

Twelve South's Curve aluminum one-piece laptop stand elevates your laptop to a healthier, more comfortable ergonomic height for viewing the screen.

The stand is a perfect place to park your laptop while using it with a Bluetooth keyboard, Wacom tablet, while connecting it to an external monitor or just placing it next to your desktop monitor for an instant dual-screen setup. Non-slip silicone grips are on the bottom and arms so everything stays in place.

When using the Curve (5.8-by-10.3-by-8.7 inches, 1.43 pounds, \$49.99), it elevates your laptop an ergonomic standard 6.5 inches off your desk, allowing you to sit up straight and look directly at the screen.

The elevated position also



TWELVE SOUTH/TNS

Twelve South's Curve aluminum one-piece laptop stand elevates your laptop to an ergonomic height for viewing the screen.

allows laptops to breathe better with maximum airflow instead of sitting flat on a desk and getting hot, which causes the computer processor to work harder.

Twelve South also has the HiRise Wireless 3-way wireless charger to keep your cell phone in a comfortable desktop view.

The charger (\$59.99) has a gunmetal chrome finish built with a back for Qi-enabled mobile phone charging, keeping your smartphone upright and the screen facing you. Smartphones with the wireless charging feature will charge quickly up to 10 watts, even through most phone cases.

It's also built with a wireless charging pad for AirPods; just pop out the Qi-certified power disc and put the case on top for charging.

When the 3.43-by-2.24-by-.47-inch disc is removed, it works

perfectly as a USB-C portable wireless charger for when you're mobile. A USB-C to USB-A removable power cable is included.

Online: twelvesouth.com



TWELVE SOUTH/TNS

The Twelve South HiRise Wireless 3-way wireless charger keeps your phone conveniently in view on a desktop.

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basically, touching pretty much anything that another human touches without immediately washing our hands afterward.

These are the little things we are all hyperaware of and justly paranoid about right now.

But it's particularly scary to think this could happen to you. Viruses, like zombies, don't spare anyone. A single bite from a zombie can infect you. A simple handshake or an uncovered cough on the bus can sicken you.

It's what makes viruses and epidemics big enough "monsters" that they're worth making movies about.

Yet, aside from the "bad touch" that spreads the virus or the bite that spreads the zombification, what virus-focused movies like "Outbreak" and "Contagion" have in common with zombie movies are depictions of total societal breakdown.

In "Blindness," a 2008 film based on Jose Saramago's novel of the same name about an epidemic that causes the infected to go blind, a once-civil quarantining center becomes a hovel where women are raped in exchange for food.

In "Carriers" (a 2009 film in which Chris Pine leads a band of friends through an epidemic-torn country), countless video games or the comic-book and TV phenomenon "The Walking Dead" (in which the world is overrun by zombies), it's every man or small



Warner Bros.

"Contagion," starring Jude Law, centers around a lethal airborne virus.

group of bandits for himself.

Even in "Contagion," the least dramatic of these films, people are reduced to stealing, looting and killing. The dead are buried in mass graves and civil society as we know it ends.

What apocalyptic films show us is that we're not just afraid of gruesome death, we're afraid societal breakdown will reveal that the ugly side of humanity is more grotesque than the necrotic, oozing faces of killer zombies, that if the worst happens — if a pandemic turns us all into potential carriers — the worst of humanity will suffice.

Because the other thing that postapocalyptic films have in common is heroes.

afraid of, but is it also, perhaps, what we secretly crave? The answer to the question of who we would become if civilized society came to a grinding halt? A total undoing of society as we know it would force humanity to survive without the comforts and social niceties we've cultivated, retreat to our most basic human instincts and create new beginnings or even whole new societies.

In the postapocalypse film, those who rise to fill the voids of leadership and rebuild society are either the worst humanity has to offer, or the very best.

These moments of human connection and empathy are playing out in real life as reliably as they play out in most postapocalyptic movies. It's proof that as long as we retain kindness and empathy for others, we can maintain our humanity even in the most horrific circumstances.

While our fears in times of pandemic may drive us to push our way through crowds and side-eye

Our hopes

Films like "Outbreak" or "12 Monkeys" break out the big guns — Dustin Hoffman and Bruce Willis, respectively — to swoop in and save the day with macho-style heroics featuring helicopter fights and time travel.

Yet, heroes in apocalypse movies don't have to wear capes or possess superhuman abilities. Instead, apocalyptic heroism often comes in the form of a kind gesture, like sharing food with a larger family, or an act of self-sacrifice — like in "Contagion," when a doctor tests a possible vaccine on herself.

We're starting to see this happen in real life, too. Such kindness has been reflected in Seattle amidst the coronavirus outbreak. Many readers responded to my story about those at highest risk of getting COVID-19 by asking how they could help these people in self-isolation. As more schools and businesses are asked to cease operations, the community has come together to provide supplies and aid to those in need.

These moments of human connection and empathy are playing out in real life as reliably as they play out in most postapocalyptic movies. It's proof that as long as we retain kindness and empathy for others, we can maintain our humanity even in the most horrific circumstances.

You don't have to survive a helicopter fight, be a time-traveling Bruce Willis, or run from sprinting zombies to be a hero in this time of fear and need. Small acts of kindness can go a long way in our communities.

the woman coughing her way through the aisles, when it comes down to it, even if selfishness and criminality reign, basic human kindness still peaks through.

Hollywood depictions of postapocalyptic cruelty and kindness may be more dramatic, but they're not wrong in the notion that crisis brings out both in our society.

Our choice

Ultimately, it comes down to one thing: We all have choices to make. And these movies seem to show that the measure of your humanity is how you react in a crisis when faced with tough decisions.

So far, even as we find ourselves in a radically new situation across the globe, with travel bans and schools and businesses shuttering, people are stepping up to help the most vulnerable, and the most vulnerable are looking out for each other.

A pregnant friend who works with incarcerated people told me her clients worry about her getting sick.

"Funny how people society treats with so little humanity (can) still show so much compassion," she told me.

You don't have to survive a helicopter fight, be a time-traveling Bruce Willis, or run from sprinting zombies to be a hero in this time of fear and need. Small acts of kindness can go a long way in our communities.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE & TECHNOLOGY

VIRTUAL CAMARADERIE



BY JESSICA ROY AND DORANY PINEDA
Los Angeles Times

Staying socially isolated doesn't mean you have to cancel your social plans. You just need to adjust them a bit.

If you've got a webcam and an internet connection, you can still host and partake in virtual hangouts with your friends in the time of coronavirus. We've got some technical advice for ways to get set up and share your screen — and then some ideas for what to do.

Before you begin, know to expect some technical difficulties. Try to have a sense of humor about the whole thing. Most of us aren't video-conferencing pros. It's likely going to take a little trial and error to get set up the first time.

Once you're ready to go, here's how to get started.

Getting set up

Phone call

You can always call people and use speakerphone. If you have friends or relatives who don't feel confident setting up a webcam, hearing their voice is better than nothing.



TNS photos

FaceTime

If you both have Apple devices, you can FaceTime. You can set it up as a one-to-one video call or set up a Group FaceTime with up to 32 people. (Group FaceTime requires newer devices and an updated iOS.) If your hands are going to be occupied and you're joining from a phone or iPad, make sure you've got a stack of books ready to lean your device up against.

Google Duo

If anyone in your planned get-together doesn't have an Apple device, Google Duo is basically an Android version of Face-

If you've got an internet connection and a webcam, you can still host dinner parties, karaoke sessions, happy hours, game nights while under quarantine

Time. The app is free to download. Up to 8 people can join a Duo call.

Skype

Up to 10 people can join a Skype group video call. Skype is free to download and works on phones, tablets and computers with webcams. If you're playing host, it'll be easier to set up the call if you're on a laptop or desktop computer, but other participants don't have to be. Add your friend's Skype contact name. Then click on their name from your contacts list before clicking the camera button in the upper-right corner to start the video call.

To share what's on your screen, hover your mouse in the video and click the icon that looks like two stacked squares on the bottom right of the video call screen and click the "Share screen" button. (If you've never done this before, your computer may prompt you to adjust your system preferences, relaunch Skype and start the call again.) You will be prompted to click "Start sharing" on a button at the bottom of the screen one more time. You and your group of friends will be able to see each other's videos at

the top of the shared screen. (For more information, visit [skype.com](#).)

Google Hangouts

If you have Gmail, that means you already have a Google account you can use to set up Hangouts for free.

Go to [hangouts.google.com](#) and click "Start a new hangout."

You can invite other people by their Gmail addresses or by emailing them a link. (That's especially handy if you want to set up the

Hangout link ahead of time for a large group or if you expect some people to be dropping in later.) You can set it up as a voice or video hangout. Up to 25 people can join a video Hangout and up to 150 people can join a voice-only Hangout.

To share your screen once the Hangout has begun, hover your mouse in the call and click the three vertical dots on the upper-right hand side of the screen and click "Share screen." (You may be prompted to adjust your system's preferences to allow this if you've never done it before, and then you might have to restart the Hangout.)

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE & TECHNOLOGY

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Unlike on Skype, if you are sharing your screen in Google Hangouts, other participants will not be able to see video of your face at the same time, so this option is less preferable if you want to be in on the "It's just like game night in real life" feeling. (For more information, visit hangouts.google.com.)



Zoom

Zoom allows free one-on-one video meetings for as long as you want or for three or more people for up to 40 minutes with their free plan. The next tier at \$14.99 a month lets you set up video calls for up to 100 participants and for up to 24 hours long.

Download the Zoom application at zoom.us, open it from your desktop and click "Launch meeting." Click "Invite participants" and either email them or add them from your Zoom contacts. After everyone has joined, you can share your screen by clicking the green "Share screen" button in the bottom center of the video. Participants will be able to see your face in a windowed video and you'll be able to see theirs. (For more information, visit zoom.us.)

What to do

Dinner party/happy hour

This one is pretty straightforward. Everyone joins the videoconference and then eats or drinks.

Karaoke

All your favorite karaoke haunts are closed, but that doesn't mean the singing has to stop. Gather your friends for some karaoke through Google Hangouts or Skype.



Book club

Pick a book to read with loved ones and video call each other to chat about it. If you don't want to wait for Amazon to ship you books, or Amazon isn't shipping non-essential goods to your area right now, you can purchase ebooks online. If your group doesn't have the attention span for a whole book — or if you want to get together sooner — you can all decide to read the same longform article.

Watch party

Social distancing doesn't mean you have to Netflix and chill alone. The streaming service has a Google Chrome extension called Netflix Party where friends can watch movies together and share their reactions through a chat room. If your net is Google Chrome browser, an extension and a Netflix account. You can do the same on a Facebook page.

Game night

Just because going out is canceled



TNS photos

doesn't mean game night has to be. You've got a few different options for re-creating your weekend plans here. Pro tip: If you're playing a game you've never played before, you might consider watching a YouTube video of someone playing it and explaining it.

Game night idea: Analog board games

If you and your friends have a copy of the same board game on your shelf at home — say, Monopoly — you can all set it up and just move the pieces at the same time. Think of it as the modern version of chess by mail. (Incidentally, this would also work if you and a friend both have a chessboard.) This is easiest with games that only require dice rolls. Something where you'd all have to dig the same unique card out of a pile to keep things moving will be too slow.

Something like Cards Against Humanity or Apples to Apples could work too if you all have it. One player would hold up the prompt card, and everyone would pick an answer card from their hand. Then players would hold up their answers to the camera for the judge to decide. You lose the anonymity of the regular version of these games, but these are challenging times. And we all have to make adjustments.

With word games like Scattergories, only one person needs to own the game. Everyone else just needs a pen and paper. The host can share his, her or their screen with the categories listed somewhere like a Google Doc. The host rolls the dice to decide the letter, opens the categories screen so everyone can see them, sets the timer and then you're off.

Game night idea: App games

It's 2012 all over again. Words With Friends, Draw Something and other app games are still kicking around and just waiting for you to challenge someone. You can be on a video call from your computer and playing together on your phones at the same time.

The Los Angeles Times has free games too. You can challenge a friend to do the day's crossword puzzle or Sudoku with you. Go to latimes.com/games, select the puzzle you want to play, click "start," and after it loads, click the icon on the upper left that resembles a person with a plus sign. That will generate a link that you can copy and paste and email them. (This only works with one other player at a time.) Games on latimes.com are free, so the other player does not need to be a subscriber.

Game night idea: Social games

Obviously, if you and your friends



are already into "Overwatch" and "Fortnite," you don't need us to tell you what to do. Have fun.

If you and your friend both have a Nintendo Switch, you can get classics such as "Mario Kart" and play together.

If you want to play with a group, the Jackbox Party Pack is a crowd-pleaser perfectly suited to social isolation. Six versions of the Jackbox Party Pack have been released, each with a different variety of trivia, drawing and word games. The packs are \$12.49 to \$29.99 and available on multiple platforms including Steam, Playstation 4, Xbox One, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Android TV. If you're on a computer, Steam is probably the easiest way to go and free to download. (You still have to pay for Jackbox, though.)

Everyone plays using their phone as a controller, so you can all be in the same room or on opposite sides of the planet. Some favorites include Fibbage, where you try to fool other players by filling in the blanks on noteworthy new stories; Quiplash, where you compete head-to-

head to come up with the funniest answers; and Trivia Murder Party, which is like if the classic "You Don't Know Jack" trivia game was hosted by the guy from "Saw." (It's much funnier than it sounds.) The sophistication levels and occasional adult humor of most of the Jackbox games make them suited to an older crowd — teenagers and up.

How to set it up: Launch Jackbox from whatever platform you're using. Start a new game of whichever you want to play. Set up a video conference and share your screen. Other players can be on video or voice-only, as long as they can see your screen and have a phone or tablet on which to play. No one else needs to download or buy anything to join in. After you start the game, go to jackbox.tv and you'll be prompted to enter the room code (you'll see it on your screen) and your name. You, as the host, will have the power to start the game once everyone is ready.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Why there's no cure

Supportive care is about the best we can do against a virus like COVID-19

By TOM AVRIL
The Philadelphia Inquirer

People hospitalized with severe symptoms from the coronavirus are given medicine to bring down the fever and fluids to keep them hydrated, generally by intravenous tube. Some patients are connected to a ventilator: a mechanical device that helps them breathe.

This menu of treatments is called supportive care, and despite the luke-warm-sounding name, there is no question that it saves lives.

But as for waging a direct attack against this virus, and most other viruses, there are no drugs. The human immune system is on its own.

The reasons involve biology and, to a lesser extent, money. Drug companies have developed treatments for a handful of viruses in the past few decades, such as HIV and the flu, but the arsenal is minimal when compared with all the antibiotics we have for treating bacteria. Remember that viruses are not bacteria, so antibiotics are no help.

The main difficulty is that viruses are technically not alive, instead depending on the "machinery" inside human cells to reproduce, said Zachary A. Klase, associate professor of biology at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. So a drug that targets and part of that parasitic cycle could harm the patient in the process.

"You want something that targets the sickness and not you," he said. "You need to look for the

special things that only the virus is doing."

A few of the enzymes used by various viruses are distinct enough from their human counterparts that they can be targeted without harming the patient, said Megan Culler Freeman, a fellow in the pediatrics department at the University of Pittsburgh, also in Pennsylvania. That is how anti-viral drugs work against HIV, for example. But even then, such drugs do not eliminate the virus, but instead keep it under control, she said.

Another reason viruses are so hard to treat with drugs is their wide variety, Klase said.

Bacteria are all related to each other, at least distantly, and share some common characteristics, such as having a cell wall. So a drug that works against one kind of bacteria, say, by disrupting that cell wall, often works against another. (That is what is meant by "broad-spectrum" antibiotics, though lately, those tried-and-true weapons have been overused, leading certain bacteria to develop resistance.)

Certain classes of viruses, on the other hand, are fundamentally different from each other. Some use RNA as their genetic code, for example, while others use DNA. Some are surrounded by an envelope, others are not.

A good analogy is to imagine that cars are about as similar to each other as various kinds of cars, Klase said. Various classes of viruses, on the other hand, can be as distinct from each other as cars and boats.

That's where the money issue comes in. Developing a new drug for each unrelated virus requires a fresh commitment of time and resources.

"A drug company would rather have one drug that'll cure everything than to have to have a time for each different problem," Klase said.

That has not kept pharmaceutical companies from testing drugs for one virus to see whether they work against another. With the new coronavirus, for example, scientists have been testing a drug called remdesivir, which was originally developed to treat Ebola. But it did not work very well against Ebola, and results so far against the coronavirus are unclear.

The interest in a coronavirus treatment is so keen that misinformation has a way of spreading much like the microbe itself. Johnson & Johnson issued a statement last week to dispel rumors that one of its antiviral drugs showed promise. The company said that it was screening a variety of antiviral compounds against the coronavirus, but that so far there is "no evidence" that darunavir, the drug that sparked the rumors, has any effect.

In fairness to the scientists, they have not been at this problem for very long.

Bacteria were first observed under a microscope in 1683. The existence of viruses, which can be less than one-tenth the size of bacteria, was not verified until more than 200 years later.

And even then, scientists could not see them. In 1892, Russian scientist Dmitri Ivanovsky reported that he had extracted fluid from a diseased tobacco plant and run it through a type of filter that was known to remove bacteria. He then demonstrated that the filtered fluid could be used to infect healthy plants. Some invisible agent — which would not be seen until the advent of electron microscopes a few decades later — was somehow transmitting disease.

Effective antibiotics have been around for close to a century. Antiviral drugs have come along only in the past few decades, and only for a few serious threats.

And they do not always help. Timing is important. Antiviral drugs can lessen the duration of the flu, for example, but only if given early in the course of the disease. By the time a person develops severe symptoms, antiviral drugs are of little use, said Freeman, the Pittsburgh physician.

That might also hold true for the new coronavirus, but more research is sorely needed, said Freeman, who studied the biology of a different coronavirus, SARS, while a Ph.D. student at Vanderbilt University in Pennsylvania.

"It's important to be able to learn these things ahead of a disaster so we'll have tools in our toolbox," Freeman said.

Multiple teams of researchers also are at work on vaccines for the new coronavirus, teaching the human immune system to make its own medicine: antibodies. The first stages of safety testing already are underway, but it will be at least a year before such a vaccine is approved for widespread use, experts predict.

For now, that leaves supportive care. But as University of Pennsylvania medical historian

David Barnes has found, nurses and doctors have been making that concept work for a long time.

At the Lazaretto Quarantine Station, a hospital on the Delaware River used to treat immigrants with yellow fever in the early 19th century, patients were more likely to survive the illness than were many in the general population, he said. The regimen was straightforward: clean bedding, rest, adequate food and drink and palliative medicines to ease the worst symptoms, said Barnes, who is writing a book on the topic.

"There are actually plenty of cures for viral illnesses," he said. "We just don't think of them as cures. We're still kind of myopically fixated on finding a cure, when what we really should be doing is getting adequate basic nursing care for all patients."

That may yet prove to be a challenge in the coronavirus outbreak. The nation's hospitals have fewer than 70,000 adult intensive-care beds, while epidemiologists say the number of U.S. coronavirus patients with severe symptoms could reach the hundreds of thousands.

If they all get sick during a short period of time, then even what Barnes calls the "care cure" may be in short supply.

Holding breath not a reliable test

An image has circulated on social media claiming that you can conduct a breath test on yourself to see if you have the coronavirus. But according to experts, this is not a credible method of knowing whether you have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

The Associated Press reported a claim seen on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, to name a few platforms, which alleges that if you take a deep breath and are able to hold it for more than 10 seconds, you have no infection. The claim says that doing this successfully — that is, without tightness, stuffiness or any discomfort — proves no fibrosis is present in the lungs, thus indicating there's no infection.

"This approach may be helpful in identifying persons with more serious lung disease," Dr. Robert Legare Atmar, an infectious disease specialist at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, told the AP. "But it will not identify persons who are infected and have mild to no symptoms."

Another expert, Richard Watanabe, a professor of preventive medicine at the University of Southern California, told PolitiFact in an email that it's "not true." "This has been circulating widely, but sadly is not true," he said. "The only way to test for COVID-19 right now is via laboratory testing."

Blood type might indicate greater risk

People with type A blood are more likely to catch the coronavirus and die from it, according to a new study published in Wuhan, China.

Type A is one of the most common blood types, but scientists urged people not to be concerned if they have type A.

Those with type O blood may be less likely to get COVID-19, according to a Johns Hopkins University map that tracks confirmed cases.

"If you are type A, there is no need to panic. It does not mean you will be infected 100 percent," researcher Gao Yingdai told the South China Morning Post. "If you are type O, it does not mean you are absolutely safe, either. You still need to wash your hands and follow the guidelines issued by authorities."

Researchers examined 206 people in Wuhan who died from the virus, and there were 63% more type A fatal cases than type O.

The study did not provide an explanation for why type A patients have a higher risk.

From wire services



iStock photos

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



THINKING OUTSIDE THE GYM

Online classes help you stay fit during outbreak

By KELLI KENNEDY
Associated Press

Steve LaTart in Minnesota is thinking of installing a space heater in his basement to re-create the atmosphere of his hot yoga classes now that his gym has closed due to coronavirus fears.

LaTart says it's part of the "new, weird, strange workout plan" he has devised during a nationwide trend of self-isolation and social distancing as the government recommends limiting gatherings to 10 or fewer people.

Gyms, yoga studios and CrossFit centers around the country are fueling the drive to stay active by offering online classes, some free of charge, or extending trial periods for at-home workouts.

Studio owners and fitness instructors are having to adjust too as they make the shift to teaching online. The Coalition of Health & Fitness Leaders, a group of fitness, nutrition and wellness industry representatives recently formed in response to the new coronavirus, hosted an online panel last week to provide guidance for instructors.

Countless people around the country who have been cooped up inside as their companies mandate work-at-home policies and their fitness centers shut down are getting creative with their workout routines.

Many are turning to online classes, grabbing bleach bottles as makeshift weights, or taking cues from YouTube challenges showing how to do crunches with furniture or turn a kitchen floor into a treadmill by soaping up the tiling.

LaTart's yoga and warrior sculpting instructors at Life Time in Minneapolis are still teaching classes. They've just moved them from the gym to cyberspace, where they are livestreaming instructions from their website. LaTart says knowing he can still participate in the classes is keeping him sane.

"I like the idea that this is something that's normal," the 38-year-old radio producer said. "This is someone I know. This is something that's familiar."

Beth Berglin, 40, a director at a charity in Miami, was used to going to boot camp-style classes four mornings a week until authorities began urging residents to avoid gatherings and she and her husband decided to stay at home as much as possible. Her gym closed this month, but she is staying active through online classes from Burn Boot Camp.

"Part of the reason we exercise is to have that mental break," she said. "I can't imagine getting through this without having some form of physical activity."



Beth Berglin displays a screen where she joins a Burn Boot Camp livestream workout from her home in Coral Gables, Fla., on March 20.

Beth Berglin

Received tons of requests from desperate parents now that schools are being canceled. Last week, obe launched four 10-minute dance and strength workouts for kids 10 and under.

Peloton, a company that sells high-end stationary bicycles and treadmills featuring instructors who give live and videotaped classes, has extended its free trial period to 90 days.

For most people, coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus.

Still, good diet and exercise can be crucial — for the young and old alike — to maintain sanity and keep the immune system strong against COVID-19. In addition to taking online courses, gym rats might now consider getting outdoors to exercise if they can, said Dr. Joe Khabbazza, a pulmonologist at Cleveland Clinic.

"Simply walk outside in nature," Khabbazza said. "People can use this as an opportunity to exercise in other ways."

Toomey encourages those filled with fear over the virus to use exercise as both a physical and spiritual balm. One of the best ways to fight the stagnation of home quarantine, she says, is to "continue to breathe and keep moving and use the medicine of that."

Free virtual exercise classes, workouts to do while quarantined

By CHRISTEN A. JOHNSON
Los Angeles Times

The spread of COVID-19 has caused countless establishments to temporarily close their facilities, including many gyms and fitness studios. If recent gym closures have you feeling stuck on what to do for a home workout, these virtual classes could be your fix. Many of the workouts are put on through the gyms via social media, and there are also countless apps to use as well. We've tried to make sure the classes on this list are free to everyone, whether you're a member of a gym or not.

Gyms

Planet Fitness

Tune into the "no judgment" gym's Facebook page every day at 6 p.m. for a live 20-minutes-or-fewer "work in" led by personal trainers, and even special guests. Taking part is free, and you don't have to be a member. No equipment required. If you can't make the time, the workout will be available for playback on the Facebook page and the gym's YouTube channel.

Core Power Yoga

The studio has put together a collection of free classes available anytime. Classes vary in length.

305 Fitness

Known for making cardio a raging dance party, 305 Fitness has about 20 free classes on its YouTube channel while its studios are closed.

Studio Three

Three takes a unique approach in combining cycling, yoga and interval training in the same gym. The gym is hosting classes on Instagram Live multiple times during the day, typically in the morning, during the lunch hour and early evening. If you miss a session, the workouts are available for playback on the app.

LA Fitness

Download the gym's app for free workouts using the Studio Zone feature, which is a free amenity for members.

Apps

Nike Training Club

Designed for full workouts at home or at the gym, with or without equipment, this app offers countless free workouts led by trainers.

FitOn

This app is free to download and the workouts, which vary from cardio to weight training to Pilates, are free to access and use at any time. Just sign up, answer questions based on your fitness levels and goals, and you're set.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Avignon: Beautiful town, youthful attitude

Clinging to a bend in the Rhone River in the south of France, Avignon looks and feels like the backdrop of a medieval fairy tale. While it's largely famous for its 14th-century history as a papal capital and its even older 12th-century bridge, Avignon has plenty to offer beyond history. Today, this walled Provencal town is a youthful place full of atmospheric cafés, fun shops and numerous hide-and-seek squares ideal for postcard-writing and people-watching.

An easy side trip from nearby must-sees like Arles and Les Baux, Avignon's charms can be sampled in half a day. Climb to its hilltop park for the town's best view, tour the immense palace that was once home to popes, stroll the traffic-free shopping district, lose yourself in the back streets or just find a shady square to call home.

The city's history dates back to well before when the Romans came to town, but it was the Catholic Church that put Avignon on the map. In 1309, a French pope was elected (Pope Clement V). The new pope, fearing Italy was too dangerous, moved the papacy to Avignon, where he could enjoy a secure rule under a supportive French king. Along with clearing out vast spaces for public squares and building a three-acre papal palace, the Church erected more than three miles of protective wall (and 39 towers), mansions for cardinals and residences for its bureaucracy. Avignon was Europe's largest construction zone, and its population grew from 6,000 to 25,000. (Today, 13,000 people live within its walls.)

The massive Palace of the Popes was the most fortified palace of the time — and with 10-foot-thick walls, it was a symbol of power. Today, it's the largest surviving Gothic palace in Europe. In all, seven popes ruled from here, making Avi-

gnon the center of Christianity for nearly 100 years.

The palace itself is pretty empty today. Along with lots of big, barren rooms, visitors can see a few original wall paintings, an elegant Gothic chapel and some beautiful floor tiles. Its climbable tower offers grand views.

Nearby, the Petit Palais Museum, located in what was a cardinal's palace, displays the Church's collection of medieval Italian painting and sculpture. Visiting this museum before going to the Palace of the Popes helps your mind furnish and populate that otherwise empty building and captures art and life during the Avignon papacy. You'll also see bits of statues and tombs — remnants of exquisite Church art destroyed during the French Revolution.

After a visit to the Palace of the Popes, hike up above it to the Parc des Rochers des Doms for a panoramic view of Avignon, the Rhone River Valley and the St. Benezet Bridge — the one made famous by the nursery rhyme "Sur le Pont d'Avignon," known to all French school kids. As one of only three bridges crossing the mighty Rhone in the Middle Ages, this strategically important span carried pilgrims, merchants, and armies into and out of town.

Over the years, floods damaged the bridge several times (and each time it was rebuilt). But in 1668, a particularly disastrous flood destroyed most of the bridge. This time, the townsfolk decided not to rebuild, and for more than a century, Avignon had no bridge across the Rhone. Today, you can pay a small fee to walk



Rick Steves

When a French pope was elected in 1309, the Catholic Church bought Avignon and built the imposing Palace of the Popes.

along a section of the ramparts and onto what remains of the bridge. It's fun to be in the breezy middle of the river with a sweeping city view.

For a close-up look at Avignon life, meander the town's back streets — home to pastry shops, earthy cafés and galleries, and cobbled lanes lined with trees and streams. I love parsing the street signs here, revealing vivid names like "Street of the Animal Furriers," "Hosiery Street" and "Street of the Golden Scissors," all of which recall the neighborhood's medieval roots.

Along the way, step inside the modern market hall, Les Halles, for a sensory celebration of organic breads, olives and festival-of-mold cheeses. Six mornings a week, the hall is bursting with fresh produce, meats and fish. With plenty of cheap

cafes, bars and tempting cheese shops, this is the local hotspot for lunch — and I can't resist a big plate of mixed seafood with a glass of white wine.

Theater buffs might want to visit in July, when Avignon booms with its massive three-week theater festival, featuring about 2,000 performances (hotels book up far in advance). Every venue is in action, creating a Mardi Gras-like atmosphere: The entire city is a stage, with mimes, fire-breathers, singers and musicians filling the streets.

Clean, lively and popular with travelers, Avignon is an intriguing blend of history, youthful energy and urban sophistication.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at [rick@ricksteves.com](mailto:ricks@ricksteves.com) and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Head underground for these attractions

When life as we used to know it resumes, our thirst to see the wonders of the world is sure to return with a vengeance. Until then, we can dream about exploring realms where countless generations before us went about their own daily business. In some parts of Europe, the everyday unfolded not outside for all to see, but deep within the bowels of the earth. Those with a penchant for poking around in unconventional sites might enjoy exploring some of Europe's greatest underground wonders.

Budapest: The city of Buda and Pest offers a third environment in the form of its extensive underground cave network. This subterranean world carved out by mineral waters that continue to flow today has created space for bunkers, dungeons, a church and a hospital. A number of attractions introduce visitors to the awe and beauty just beneath their feet.

Inside city limits, just below the castle, the Hospital in the Rock and Nuclear Bunker Museum is a complex showing how this space served as a hospital during the air raids of World War II, and was once again pressed into service as a place to treat the



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

wounded during the country's uprising in 1956. As the Cold War took hold, it was repurposed into a secret nuclear bunker and fitted out with a hospital to be used in the event of a nuclear attack. The museum is located at 1012 Budapest, Lovas ut 4/c. Guided tours in English are offered several times throughout the day. Admission costs \$0.80 Hungarian forint (about \$15.75) for adults and 2540 HUF for children. Online: sziklakorhoz.hu/en

Those up for hopping on a public bus to Budapest's ever-growing II District will find even greater adventure beckoning. A three-hour tour explores the Palvolgyi cave, billed as the longest cave network in Hungary. Once visi-

tors have been properly geared up, they descend a metal ladder some 30 feet below ground. From there, they progress through a room that once served as a chapel and past stalactites and other interesting rock formations. As some of the passageways are tight, and the air down there can be thin, visitors should be aware of their physical limitations. The 2200 HUF ticket price includes a guide, gear and cave entrance. Palvolgyi Cave is found at Szepvolgyi ut 162, Budapest and can be reached by city buses 65 or 111. Online: tinyurl.com/sh66fg

Kiev: The skyline of Ukraine's stunning capital is defined by a seemingly endless array of spires and cupolas, but for a singularly beguiling site, head to the Monastery of the Caves. Here, the relics of some 120 saints who made their homes in these very caves and their immediate surroundings as far back as the 11th century have found their spot of eternal rest.

Beneath the resplendent, robin's-egg-blue Gate Church of the Trinity, visitors descend a steep staircase leading several stories underground. By candlelight, they navigate past nooks and crannies that harbor caskets containing the embalmed remains of the monks, the sight

of an embalmed hand and the withered flesh of a finger a poignant reminder of the humanity of those who lie within. Other niches house crosses and other relics. The Pechersk Lavra makes up part of a functioning Orthodox monastery and is peopled with priests and monks, adding to the sensation of past and modern worlds colliding. The complex is located at Lavrska St. 15 and is a 15-minute walk from metro station Arsenalna. Entry is free. Online: lavra.ua/en

Vienna: "The Third Man" is a classic British film set in a shattered, dismal Vienna shortly after the end of World War II. In this 1949 noir film, the American Holly Martins is summoned to the city by his friend Harry Lime, but upon arrival, learns that Lime is dead. The film follows Martins' quest to get to the bottom of what happened to his friend. The Third Man Tour is one of the city's most enduring tourist attractions.

Equipped with helmet and headlamp, visitors descend a spiral staircase into the city's vast sewer system, built in the 1830s and largely unchanged. The tour goes to places where scenes from the film were shot and displays the inner workings of the still-functioning wastewater system.

Several tours are offered

throughout the day on Thursdays through Sundays, May through October. A giant red seat grates and neon sign denote the tour's starting point at Friedrichstrasse 12. Entry costs 7 euros for adults and 3.50 euros for children, who must be at least 12. Online: tinyurl.com/rthxm3

Palermo: Beneath Sicily's largest city lie the Capuchin Catacombs, a burial site since the late 16th century. At first, interment here was exclusively for monks, whose bodies were dried out on racks of ceramic pipes, embalmed and sealed within glass cabinets. Gradually, citizens of stature could choose to be entombed there as a mark of prestige, dressed in clothing fashionable at the time of their passing. Donations from the relatives of the deceased would pay for their upkeep, but once the payments stopped, the body would be put aside on a shelf. Burials continued until the 1920s. One of the last interred was Rosalia Lombardo, who died of pneumonia at age two.

This macabre exhibit, the final resting place for more than 9,000 souls, can be visited daily year round. The catacombs are located at Piazza Cappuccini. The cost of entry is 3 euros. Online: palermocatacombs.com

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe

Distance learning

Winery near Wiesbaden offers educational talks, lots of room to maintain personal space

BY DAVID EDGE
Stars and Stripes

If you're looking to get out of the house and into nature, and if that hasn't been forbidden by the authorities where you live as part of the fight against the coronavirus, the Robert Weil Winery near Wiesbaden could be the place for you.

Walking in the open air among the vines is a great way to break the monotony of being cooped up indoors during these times of coronavirus self-isolation and quarantine.

The winery and estate are located in the undulating countryside, 12 miles from Clay Kaserne in Wiesbaden, in the small, picturesque town of Kiedrich.

Walking into the grounds of the estate, I was struck by how beautiful it is. Tall, well-manicured bushes line either side of the gravel walkway leading to the 19th-century manor house. Vines stretch as far as the eye can see on either side of the path.

A staff member greeted me at the manor house and encouraged me to explore the estate's 222 acres.

The path I'd taken led me past a brook and up into the hills, from where I had a view of Kiedrich.

I thought, as I walked amongst the vines, that they must be breathtaking when in full bloom.

I passed many locals, old and young, out walking. Of course, I stayed at least one meter away from them, including when I sat on one of the benches dotted around the estate to rest my legs and take in the fresh air.

Back at the manor house, I was invited to view the estate's original tasting rooms. A sommelier, or wine expert, explained in fluent English the more than 20 varieties of Riesling produced by Robert Weil. The vineyard produces dry, sweet and sparkling Rieslings and everything in between, and all are reasonably priced, he said.

But he could only talk about the wines — tastings have been suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic. I'll have to come back when the virus is behind us and, hopefully, the vines are in blossom.

Edge.david@stripes.com
Twitter: @DavidEdge96798393



The Robert Weil Winery vineyard grows grapes for the production of more than 20 varieties of Riesling.



ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: Muelhberg 5, 65399 Kiedrich
A 20-minute drive from Clay Kaserne in Wiesbaden, 1 hour on the A63 highway from Kaiserslautern, 1½ hours via the B50 road from Spangdahlem or the same time from Baumholder via the B41

TIMES

Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

COSTS

Entry to the estate and vineyards is free. Wine is available for purchase, with bottles starting at around 14 euros

INFORMATION

Online: weingut-robert-weil.com/en

— David Edge

Photos from top to bottom:
Kiedrich, Germany, is visible from the Robert Weil Winery vineyards, which grow on the hills that surround the town.

The Robert Weil estate winery's original manor house was built in the mid-1800s. The estate still uses the manor for its tasting rooms, pictured at bottom.

PHOTOS BY DAVID EDGE/Stars and Stripes

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



JOHN CARPENTER, CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS

The writer's wife, Mary Carpenter, walks along the Pilgrims Path near Teelin in County Donegal. The West Coast of Ireland can best be appreciated when seen up close.

Ireland's 'Wild' side

The quieter corner of the isle's rugged West Coast is better explored on foot

BY JOHN CARPENTER
Chicago Tribune

I bounced the rental car slowly up the narrow, one-lane road and pulled up near the only other car in the unpaved parking area. My family and I tumbled out and looked up at the very, very long mountain path that disappeared into the cool mist.

As I put on my warm coat, my brain wandered back to that lovely little pub with the smoking chimney we passed a mile or so ago on the main road.

My family was undaunted, however. So we started walking.

What unfolded was a lovely 5-mile round-trip trek on the Pilgrims Path at County Donegal's Slieve League Cliffs. The soaring sea cliffs are a stunning attraction on the far northwestern tip of Ireland, near the uppermost end of an area dubbed the Wild Atlantic Way. The views of the mountains and valleys, even in the mist, were worth every step. And they made the eventual visit to the aforementioned pub all the more rewarding.

Outings like this were at the top of our short list of expectations for an off-season visit to rural Ireland, when daylight is scarce and clouds and rain are plentiful. Our odd timing was driven by the desire to visit our son, wrapping up his fall semester in Dublin. But there's a certain beauty in visiting a place that is beautiful no matter when you go.

Each of our four days in the counties of Donegal, Sligo and Mayo included plenty of fresh air and walking — pursuits rewarded with comfortable chairs, warm fires and equally warming beverages. Would we have seen more and done more if we'd been there in August? Probably. But I bet we would have also spent more time checking off "must-see" boxes, and less time checking in with each other — easier to do on a long, uncrowded walk or in a quiet pub.

Accommodations are key in off-season travel, when you long for more than just a clean room at the end of a long day. We wanted places we could settle into. Rathmullan House in Donegal

was an easy choice for our first stop. My wife and I stayed here on our inaugural vacation as a couple more than 25 years ago, before we were married. It's always nice to revisit a place that reminds you of falling in love.

The old inn has aged well. Instead of a sprawling, American-style lobby, the public areas consist of a series of small living rooms, most with a well-tended fire, and one with a well-tended bar.

After a bracing walk along the waters of nearby Lough Swilly, we refreshed up and hunkered down for a relaxing drink by the fire. It was a new parental experience in a country with a drinking age of 18. My 20-year-old son and I sipped a Yellow Spot Irish whiskey, a magnificent discovery for me. And my 17-year-old daughter had her first half-pint of Guinness, gamely turning down the offer of "a wee drop of black currant" to ease the taste. (We were told she could imbibe as long as she was with her parents.)

Rathmullan House's Cook & Gardner restaurant offered a delicious first meal. With the glacial fjord of Lough Swilly just outside the window, we all went heavy on the fish offerings and weren't disappointed.

My early-morning walk the next day, while the family slept, was another quiet pleasure. A short path through a stand of woods left me alone on a vast beach at low tide. It's a popular place for horseback riding. I waited to see if some riders might thunder past on the firm sand, as they did on our visit 25 years earlier. But none came.

After a few deep breaths of cool sea air, I wandered back to the hotel for the first of what would be four consecutive "full Irish breakfasts." My plate was covered with a fried egg, two "bangers" (sausage links), two pieces of Irish bacon (resembling ham more than our traditional strips), one portobello mushroom, a tomato and the obligatory and mysterious white and black "puddings" — sausages made from pork blood, oatmeal and other spices.

Breakfast complete, we headed back to the cliffs of Slieve League. While our earlier hike up Pilgrims Path ended in a veil of mist, intelligence gathered afterward at The Rusty Mackerel pub in Teelin pointed us to an alternate route that culminated with a short walk

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27



DAVE WALSH, VW PICS, UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP, GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Mountain sheep block the road to Bunglass, Slieve League, Donegal, Ireland.

FROM PAGE 26
to the top of the cliffs. We took in spectacular views from a perch nearly three times higher than the venerable and more-visited Cliffs of Moher a few hours south down the coast.

The next stop was the relatively new Ice House hotel in Ballina. My wife, who has a New Age streak, discovered it in Ireland's Blue Book of country house hotels, castles and the like. She was drawn to its spa. I was sold on its waterside location and restaurant reviews.

Many rooms, ours included, have balconies a few feet from the River Moy. With rain in the forecast and our son back in Dublin for classes, wife and daughter decided on a local hike followed by quality spa time. I fired up the rental car and headed along the ocean road south toward Westport.

Devotees of the legendary Chieftains flutist Matt Molloy make pilgrimages to this picturesque village to visit his eponymous pub, a venue for traditional Irish music seven nights a week. It being the morning, I settled for a walk around town and stumbled upon West Coast Rare Books, a wonderful little shop that I did not leave empty-handed.

The Wild Atlantic Way is a tourist-attraction name, to be sure, meant to draw visitors west from Dublin and get them to explore beyond the scenic Ring of Kerry in the southwest corner of the island. Spanning 1,500 miles of roads along the country's West Coast, the area lives up to its wild name. The land is rugged and hilly, alternating between unspoiled fields of heather and thorn bush and neatly walled patches of farms, all scattered with roaming sheep.

Even on a solitary drive on a cloudy day, it's a road with views that command you to stop, as I did many times.

That night at dinner, the Ice House restaurant was further proof that Ireland has long since shed its reputation for mediocre, boiled-to-oblivion food. My seared hake was close-your-eyes-and-moan good, and my wife and daughter raved about their locally sourced salmon.

Afterward we enjoyed another friendly pub in the hotel, teaching my daughter that drinking in Ireland is less about the quantity and more about the quality of conversation.

As if on cue the next day, rain started as we left the Wild Atlantic Way on our drive back to big-city Dublin. Our trip was a welcome reminder that while Ireland has modernized since the heady Celtic Tiger economic boom of the '90s and early 2000s, it's still a place with vast, beautiful landscapes best enjoyed on foot.

KNOW & GO

This trip was taken before concerns about the coronavirus brought most travel to a halt. Though travel is not advised at this time, these lovely destinations will be accessible again in the future, and we are running this travel story with that in mind.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific



Step away from the cellphone

Dive into the deep tranquility of Tahiti

BY JOHN BRILEY

The Washington Post

This rain — relentless, chilling, downright vengeful — wasn't in the brochure. I am sitting on the gunwale of a dive boat off the French Polynesian atoll of Fakarava about to back-roll into a tropical sea famous for its abundance of sharks. I'm with two other divers and a guide in Tumakohua Pass, one of the two major breaks in this necklace of coral where the ocean feeds a 37-by-14-mile lagoon.

Swells pitch the boat as the rain turns horizontal. We are only a few hundred yards from shore, but the dock from where we departed is barely visible through the gale. At our guide's signal, we drop from the maelstrom into the blue calm.

Fakarava is one of five atolls in French Polynesia, a collectivity of 118 islands cast across the South Pacific Ocean like unconfirmed rumors. The best known of these, and the territory's commercial and cultural center, is Tahiti. I came to these islands to dive and in hopes of finding remnants of the ancient Polynesian culture, a playful, kind, egalitarian ethos exquisitely captured in David Howarth's book "Tahiti: A Paradise Lost."

First things first. As we drop past 50 feet, I see them, dozens of gray reef sharks gliding along a wall of coral, at once sleek, powerful, beautiful and (sure) a little unnerving. They come to feed on the buffet of species in the pass and have only grown in number since 2006, when the territorial government established a shark sanctuary here. Experts estimate the local shark population in the hundreds.

They feed at night, so we're seeing them in a relatively passive state, although whenever I approach one for a photo, it bolts into the dreamy blue background. Our guide, Gils — lanky, dark-featured, serene — drifts meditatively, perking up only at the appearance of a school of small skipjack tuna. My focus swivels from them to the

sharks to the organic brilliance of the coral to a massive green-and-blue humphead wrasse, a fish that can reach 400 pounds, silhouetted in the stormy light above.

We barely have to kick at all because the current is escorting us back toward the boat dock in the village of Tetamanu (population: 40), where I'd arrived the day before after a 90-minute boat ride from the airport in the slightly larger town of Rotoava. There is no other way to get here, and no cars in Tetamanu, either; all travel is by boat, foot or fin, across, into or adjacent the infinite acreage of radiant water.

In fact, take away the Yamaha outboards and a few other modern trappings, and the place probably looks a lot like it did when the Polynesians first settled here in A.D. 500 after paddling or sailing canoes across immense expanses of ocean. They navigated by wayfinding, dividing the horizon into 16 sections and reading wind, waves, currents, and the movements of birds, fish and stars, an even more remarkable achievement when one sees how tiny and tentative this atoll appears on a map, engulfed by the Pacific Ocean.

'People say they come here to disconnect, and most of them do. But you'll also connect with nature, yourself, whoever you're with.'

Vaiete Malaty

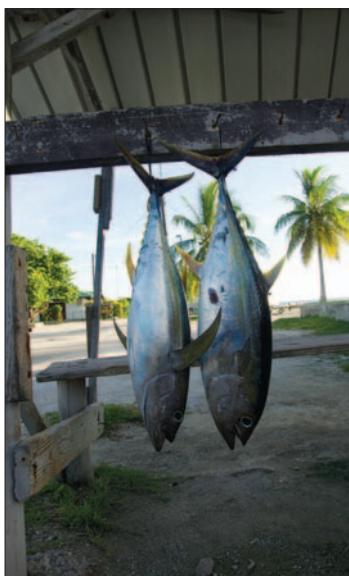
Manager of Motu Aito guesthouse

Tetamanu, perhaps especially in the driving rain, feels like the end of the Earth, and that's a big part of the allure, says Vaiete Malaty, who manages the Motu Aito guesthouse, a collection of eight wood-and-thatch bungalows where I'm staying. ("Motu" is the Tahitian word for islet, and Fakarava, like most atolls, is made up of dozens to hundreds of them.)

"People say they come here to disconnect, and most of them do," aided occasionally by power and Wi-Fi outages in this isolated spot, she says. "But you'll also connect with nature, yourself, whoever you're with."

The next day, I head back north for a tour of Rotoava with Enoha Pater, a guide who greets me at the boat dock wearing a turquoise pareo (wrap) around his waist and little else.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



PHOTOS BY JOHN BRILEY/The Washington Post

Two freshly caught tuna hang for sale on the main road in Rangiroa. Fresh fish is a staple of the French Polynesian diet, and even many gas stations sell cuts of sushi-grade tuna and other seafood. Top, bungalows stretch into the lagoon at the Kia Ora Resort in Rangiroa, French Polynesia, a destination known for scuba diving, snorkeling and relaxed island living.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

FROM PAGE 28

"This island has two rental cars, three scooters, two nurses and no doctor; everything serious, we give to the shark," he says with a smile as we hit 80 mph on a dirt road in his 2012 Saab SUV. He speaks English with an Asian cadence, having learned English and Japanese simultaneously while working at a Club Med in Mo'orea.

We stop in on a family-run coconut oil operation — one of the main industries here, along with farming the oysters that produce black pearls — then wend through stands of kahia, tohono and atuo trees while Enoha tells me about plucking lobsters off the reef at low tide (but only during the first-quarter moon) and surfing the legendary wave at Teahupoo, Tahiti, where he was drubbed on the reef and broke his arm. We stop to snorkel at a secluded aue of sugar-white sand framed by swaying palms and the pearlescent lagoon. A sailboat anchored offshore is the only other sign of human life.

The back road ends at a sprawling cape of beached coral that marks the west side of Garuae Pass, at a mile wide the largest pass in French Polynesia. Again, that end-of-the-Earth aura, broken only by a dive boat heaving on lapis swells outside the reef, and my urge to get back underwater to commune with the rainforest of life.

I have a short flight to another wiggly atoll, Rangiroa, and alight at the Kia Ora Resort & Spa, a dreamy property planted on the sandy shores of French Polynesia's biggest lagoon. The sun comes out, casting its magic on a preposterously appealing scene — thatch bungalows built over the lustrous water, an outrigger paddler gliding across the horizon line, a waiter carrying umbrella drinks to bronzed tourists in an infinity pool.



PHOTOS BY JOHN BRILEY/The Washington Post

An outrigger canoe sits in the stillness of dawn along the shores of Mo'orea, an island just west of Tahiti. Mo'orea features lush, soaring mountains, rain-fed streams, sandy beaches, hypnotic lagoon waters and, like Tahiti, fine French-inspired cuisine.

The Kia Ora is also a five-minute boat ride from the main attraction here: the diving in Tiputa Pass, famous for its vibrant reef and a family of dolphins known to approach divers.

"Oh, sometimes they come right up to you," Magali Bazzano tells me on the porch of the on-site dive center. "Rub their bellies; they like it. Just don't do that with the hammerhead sharks."

One can be tempted in remote yet populated places like this to assume there's action just around the next corner. And one afternoon on a rented scooter, I go looking for it, riding west to swales of beached coral at Avatoru Pass, site of occasional pro surfing competitions. All is quiet there, as it is around the few lagoon-front resorts I pop into. I see flashes of activity off the main road — local kids riding bikes, a fisherman selling two

beautiful, glistening tuna and a boatload of snorkelers unloading at a dock — but that's the extent of it. This isn't Miami Beach, and that's a wonderful thing.

Besides, action is in the heart of the beholder. After dinner, I walk away from the soft glow of the Kia Ora, across the utility road and into the pitch-black night of the oceanside beach. To a soundtrack of breaking waves and clinking shells and coral, I look up into the spangled dome of stars, so many and so bright, and gaze until my neck aches.

The next morning on a solo snorkel trip through the pass, I roll from boat into ocean and see the pod — a mom and a calf not 10 feet in front of me and, below them, five other dolphins. They seem suspended, as if frozen in amber, but within seconds, they're rocketing into the dark blue (no bellies offered). I kick

to try to line up a photo, but it's pointless.

I spend my final two days on the island of Mo'orea, a 30-minute ferry ride from Papeete, the main city on Tahiti and the bustling capital of French Polynesia. Beyond Papeete's congestion, colorful market, bars, shops and busy industrial port, much of Tahiti — and all of Mo'orea — look very much like the brochure, with reef-fringed coastline and forested hills that sweep up to pinnacles of jungle green.

From the ferry dock in Mo'orea, I follow the island's coastal road past fruit stands, modest homes, black pearl shops, tattoo parlors and cafés, tracing the bays where Captain Cook and other emissaries of Britain, Spain, France and Russia dropped anchor. The French claimed these islands while their colonial rivals were distracted

or uninterested (long story; read Howarth), and today, Tahiti and Mo'orea in particular flaunt a France-meets-old-Hawaii vibe.

I taste it in the poisson cru (raw tuna with coconut milk) at Le Lizard Jaune Cafe, an open-air roadside restaurant in Mo'orea where the owner, Dominique, flits among the tables in a floral top and pants. I see, hear and smell it in the Papeete market, stalls of fresh fish adjacent island-style carvings and weavings and, outside, gaily colored fabrics alongside a table of pastries overseen by a Gallic baker in a towering white chef's hat. And it's on full display on the beach in front of Les Tipaniers hotel, bar and restaurant in Mo'orea, where French families — Speedos, body oil, cigarettes and delightfully unattended children — seat in the sun.

My closest brushes with old Tahitian culture come at the Papeete ferry dock, where an old woman, perhaps confused by my attempts to engage her in conversation, smiles warmly while offering me her lei flower necklace, and in supermarkets and shops, where staff and customers alike seem content, peaceful and unhurried.

In the waning hours of my trip, before a ferry ride back to Papeete and a taxi to the airport, I join a guide for a surf session. He picks me up from a beach in his boat, motors us over the luminescence and ties off to a mooring buoy. The waves, which appeared small from afar, rumble over the reef, sections of which jut above the water line. I swallow dryly as we paddle toward the lineup. But soon I remember where I am and imagine how I'd feel if I squandered this fantasy. I turn, paddle hard and drop into a glassy, head-high wave, riding a silver of the South Pacific toward the setting sun as the colorful blur of sea life races by beneath the board.



Sharks cruise in Tumakohua pass on the south end of the Fakarava atoll in French Polynesia. Hundreds of sharks frequent the pass, which also features excellent snorkeling.



A school of black triggerfish swims a reef in Tiputa Pass, Rangiroa. The pass is home to a dazzling array of life, including a pod of dolphins known to approach divers.

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WEEKEND: FOOD

Hunkered down, but not hungry

Freeze produce bought in bulk to prolong edibility

BY BEN MIMS
Los Angeles Times

Did you overbuy a bunch of produce in a panic fit with healthy eating intentions, only to realize there's no way you and your hunkered-down partner and pets can get through it? You're not alone. But don't force yourself all that kale: Here's how to prep it and other fast-spoiling goods so they last just as long as that box of high-protein quinoa spaghetti you reluctantly had to buy because it was the only thing left on the shelf.

Bread

Any loaf of bread, whether it's the sliced kind from the grocery or an artisanal loaf, freezes well. The key is to slice it first, then place small strips of parchment or wax paper between the slices, so you can reassemble the loaf and the slices won't stick back together as they freeze. Once reassembled, wrap the loaf tightly in plastic wrap, then once again in foil; it will last this way in your freezer for at least a month.

When you're ready to revive it, break off a slice and warm it directly in your standing toaster, toaster oven, conventional oven or, if you're really lazy, directly over a gas burner set to the lowest setting. One caveat I've found in my years as a bread freezer: Revived toast is as good as new only while it's hot, so get your nut butter and jam or avocado on it quickly and eat it within a couple minutes, before it has a chance to cool to a chewy cardboard texture.

Fruit

While most fruits will keep at room temperature or in the refrigerator for at least a couple of weeks, it doesn't hurt to get into the habit of freezing them too, especially berries, bananas and other soft ones that will spoil faster.

First, line a baking sheet with parchment paper, then spread your fruit on it. If you've got blueberries and raspberries, leave them whole, but hull and quarter any strawberries. Peel and slice bananas into bite-size pieces. Do the same with mango, papaya, pineapple or any other tropical fruit you like. Once laid out, place the sheet in the freezer and let the fruit freeze completely. Then, pop the fruit off the parchment paper and divide the fruit among reusable plastic bags or airtight plastic containers. They'll keep this way for at least a month or more.

When you're ready to thaw, it's best to do it overnight in the fridge so the fruit maintains some structural integrity. You're not really going to want to eat a thawed, frozen berry or piece of pineapple the same way you would if it was fresh. Instead, fold them into a loaf cake or muffin batter, blend them into a smoothie or with your yogurt, bake them into a cobble or pie, or cook them down with some sugar and a splash of lemon juice for a quick jam that you can spoon over toast, ice cream or into a shaker to mix with booze for a fruity cocktail.



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Greens & vegetables

There's no reason to let your supply of vegetables run low just because the frozen varieties are gone or picked over. Buy fresh vegetables and freeze them yourself. All contenders are welcome, especially hearty greens like kale, spinach, swiss chard and mustard/collard/turkey greens, but also cruciferous veggies like cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage, as well as carrots, asparagus, green beans, peas, etc.

A childhood of growing up on a farm left me with this, the most valuable skill for times like we're in now. We called it "putting up" vegetables for the winter, and it basically entails blanching vegetables, then packing them in containers to go in the freezer. We'd do this with our two-week harvest of cream peas and would have gallon bags upon gallon bags to tide us over for a whole year. Let me break it down for you:

First, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. While that's happening, set up a large bowl of ice water next to it. Once you chop your vegetables into bite-size pieces (this is not necessary at this stage, but makes it easier to use them once you're ready later) and toss them in the water to cool until they're al

dente. This step is called blanching, and you do it to stop the enzymes in the vegetables that would continue to spoil them, even in extreme cold conditions like the freezer. (It also sets the color of vegetables so they're vibrant and more pleasing to eat.) All vegetables have different cooking times, but similar to the way you test pasta, you want to take a piece of veg out every couple of minutes, depending on what it is, of course, and take a bite: It should be firm but yielding, like biting into a fresh cucumber.

Once the vegetables are ready, drain them (pour the whole lot in a colander if you're doing just one batch or use a slotted spoon to lift the veg out so you can reuse the water) and plunge them into the ice water to stop them from cooking. Give them a quick stir and let them hang out for about 20 to 30 seconds (no longer or they'll get waterlogged and soggy), then drain them.

Dry the vegetables well on paper towels (or let them air dry on a kitchen towel if your paper supply is low), then portion them into usable amounts in resealable plastic bags or airtight containers. Place them in the freezer and, voila, you've made your own frozen vegetables to use whenever you need them, whether that's two days or two months from now.

Herbs & aromatics

Herbs have the shortest life span of most produce, but that doesn't mean you should overlook them when stocking up on essentials. After all, how good will that boiled pasta really taste with no seasonings on it?

Similar to the greens and vegetables above, you can blanch and freeze herbs (parsley and cilantro work particularly well in this case, but only need to be blanched for quite literally three seconds), but the easiest and best way is to chop them up, distribute them among the divots of an ice cube tray, and cover them with a little olive oil. The oil protects their flavor and color from oxidation and helps preserve them for months. That way, when your pasta or tomato sauce is ready, you can pop out a frozen cube of herbs and oil and stir it in, letting the heat naturally thaw and revive the herbs so they flavor whatever you're cooking.

But don't stop there. Apply this principle to onions,

scallions, shallots and garlic. But here you get two options: One is to mimic the herb prep exactly by chopping the aromatics, then portioning into ice cube trays and covering with oil before going in the freezer. This is especially helpful if you're cooking for one or two and won't need that much chopped onion anyway. Toss a frozen cube or two of chopped onion or garlic into your heating pot and they'll be sizzling away in no time to flavor the base of your tomato sauce or soup.

The second method is arguably better. First, cook a big batch of sliced onions or scallions or garlic in oil until caramelized and tender, then let it cool completely. Spoon the mixture into ice cube trays or small plastic containers and top with more oil, if needed. This way, when you want that slow-cooked flavor in an instant, you can stir a cube of caramelized onions into your pasta, caramelized scallions into your chicken soup or caramelized garlic into your mashed potatoes.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE & BOOKS

Plumbing problems

Coronavirus have you worried about toilet paper? Public urged not to flush inappropriate items

BY DARCEL ROCKETT ■ Chicago Tribune



The photos from supermarkets of aisles emptied of paper products get no less jarring as the coronavirus continues to have an impact. People reportedly are asking other shoppers before they park at a store if toilet paper is available.

But carts full of toilet paper lead one to ponder just how much damage we can do to our toilets during self-quarantine. (Bidets are becoming popular.) According to Patrick Sullivan, a 24-year plumbing veteran with Wheeling, Ill.-based Taylor Plumbing Inc., it's a lot of damage if common sense isn't used. Baby wipes? Those don't go in the toilet.

As for Kleenex? That, too, is a no-go.

Paper towels? Nope.

"Baby wipes, even though some of them say they're biodegradable, they really aren't," Sullivan said. "Those are one of the No. 1 causes of a backup in plumbing systems — baby wipes and paper towels. Paper towels are pretty tough. They're designed to absorb spills, but they're not designed like toilet paper, which is supposed to break down as soon as it hits water. They have a tendency to clump up, and that causes problems."

Craig Campiglia, a retired Chicago plumber and former president of the Plumbers Contractors Association, agrees. A plumber featured in the book "The Poop Diaries," he said a friend saw a lady buying eight packages of paper napkins, guessing the intent would be for the toilet. But dinner napkins do not break up in the way toilet paper does.

"It will flow for a little while, and then it will stop flowing, and being that it's wet, it has weight to it," he said. "Then it dries and gets hard, and as you flush more stuff down the toilet, it acts as a dam. It will plug, then we've got to come into the building with a rod and rod it out, and people don't realize that."

Campiglia said an industry friend sent him a picture of a guy with a gold shirt, gold chains and a gold wristband citing: "This will be the plumbers in the next couple of weeks rodding sewers."

Sullivan hasn't seen an uptick in plumbing calls since self-distancing became a mandate in the Chicagoland area, but he thinks that's because people also don't want those from the outside coming into their space unless it's a true emergency.

"If it's not spraying everywhere, people are putting it off until we get an all clear or things change a little bit," he said.

"This is a crazy time," Campiglia said. "I don't know why people are hoarding toilet paper. But I do know the only thing that should go down a toilet is sh... pi... and toilet paper. Anything else, put it in a bag, seal it up and toss it in the garbage. That's what it's for."



iStock

The Poop Diaries

Abby Ross

Yes, plumbers have encountered snakes, rats, weapons and drugs while on duty, but according to the plumbers who fill 10 chapters of Abby Ross' book, "The Poop Diaries," they wouldn't trade their jumprunts for any other career.

Ross, a Chicago resident, offers a behind-the-scenes look at plumbers' service calls, so readers can get a firsthand account of some of the more memorable ones. What unfolds in the 200-plus-page book are tales that are "disgusting, hilarious, or scary." But don't be fooled, as Ross says in her introduction. This book is about poop — but so much more.

"At first I pictured the book to be pure humor, but as I interviewed these people, I realized that there was so much more depth to their experiences than just the sex toys and poop," Ross said.

It was when Ross met her plumber, Jon, on a cold night in Chicago that she got the idea to write about this particular field of contractors.

"My toilet clogged on a Wednesday night," Ross said. "I called a plumber around 8-9 p.m. Jon came over and fixed the clog within 20 minutes. He obviously knew his stuff. I asked if he could tell me his five greatest hits, his best service calls, and he was so hilarious. I really enjoyed his stories and thought: I want to write a book about you."

Ross broadened her scope and talked with plumbers who grew up in Green Bay, Wis., who make their home in Edmonton, Canada, and who work in Oakland, Calif.

Not to give too many spoilers, but the stories from Carissa and Jac, women plumbers, are not to be missed. Carissa was installing a urinal in a bar when a customer approached her for a date. Jac fixed a restaurant's toilet pro bono and offered her advice and card to an employee to give to the business' owner. When asked why the owner didn't call her, the employee's response was: "I showed him your card. When he saw you were a woman, he did not believe anything you said."

"Their perspective adds so much to the book," Ross said. "I think that with the #MeToo movement, women's rights have come a long way. Unfortunately in plumbing, it's just not there yet."

Ross said that's unfortunate, given that there is a shortage of plumbers, according to numerous trades publications and learning institutions. She hopes her book encourages people to go into the trades.

"A lot of people think plumbers are blue-collar workers who have plumber's cracks and don't make a lot of money — that is so far from the truth," Ross said.

She said that many of the plumbers she interviewed have second homes and boats, lives they created after attending a trade school or doing an apprenticeship instead of going to college.

Kelly Castrogiovanni, president and owner of Terry Plumbing in the greater Chicago area, said becoming a licensed plumber takes five years of learning and training, but once the license is in hand, plumbers will always be able to find a job because they are always needed.

"It is a hard sell because there's a lot of heavy lifting. People think they don't want to be knee-deep in a sewer line," she said. "But you get out of school making \$100,000 instead of getting out of college owing over \$100,000."

— Darcel Rockett/Chicago Tribune

WEEKEND: MUSIC



Life without live music

Virus-related cancellations, postponements creating chaos, financial concerns for touring artists and crews

ALLISON STEWART
Special to The Washington Post

Alaina Moore, one half of husband-and-wife indie pop duo Tennis, didn't really begin to worry about her band's spring tour until March 6, the day the city of Austin canceled the South by Southwest festival over concerns about the spread of the coronavirus. In the next 10 days, as the threat from the virus grew, cities and states began to issue individual bans on gatherings, first of more than 1,000 people, then 250, then 50, each announcement setting off successive tripwires of anxiety among traveling musicians and the people who work for them.

Moore and her husband, Patrick Riley, self-finance Tennis, paying to record their new album, "Swimmer," and set up a tour to support it out of their savings account. Touring is how they pay themselves back. The day after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a recommendation that gatherings of more than 50 people be canceled for the next eight weeks, the duo had what they call a "come to Jesus" moment.

"We're in shock a little bit," she says. "We were hoping that some of our tour dates could be salvaged, because we were going to tour all the way into mid-May, but now it's very obvious that this is beyond anything we could've imagined, and we're going to be home for a long time."

Tennis joins an ever-growing list of bands postponing and canceling concerts: Miami's Ultra music festival, Coachella and its sister festival Stagecoach, concerts by Cher, BTS, Maluma, the Rolling Stones and Billie Eilish, England's Glastonbury Festival, and across-the-board suspensions of North American shows put on by industry leaders AEG Presents and Live Nation Entertainment.

Their albums pushed back, their tours postponed or canceled, musicians find themselves in a situation identical to that of civilians: suddenly stuck at home, isolated, stir-crazy and scared, unsure how long their money will hold out, or if they will have jobs to return to. And, like everybody else, they've been steadily adjusting their expectations downward: Maybe things will be OK in a few weeks, then maybe by summer, then maybe by the fall.

"A lot of your blue-collar-income-level artists, they can't afford not to do the work," says Nick Storch, an agent with Artist Group International. "Them taking three, six months off, they're literally living hand to mouth."

For virtually any artist, a canceled show is usually a rare and seismic event, anyway. Tours are exhausting slogs, and tour buses and vans are petri dishes during cold and flu season, but the show almost always goes on. On average, an artist might only cancel two or three dates in a decades-long career.

'A lot of your blue-collar-income-level artists, they can't afford not to do the work, Them taking three, six months off, they're literally living hand to mouth.'

Nick Storch
agent with Artist Group International

Moore had the flu for Tennis' entire 2018 tour, which continued even after she fainted in a Whole Foods and was hospitalized. "People would've been mad at me for canceling," she says. "The expectation is, if you can physically get onto the stage, you're doing the shows. There's a very toughened attitude within touring culture, where everyone is sick all the time and making sacrifices and you just play the show anyway."

Many musicians and their touring crews live paycheck to paycheck, but those below the line — drivers, merch people, guitar techs — are even less financially equipped to weather months off the road. Employees at shuttered music venues are also struggling. Audrey Fix Schaefer, communications director for I.M.P., which runs Washington, D.C.'s 9:30 Club and the Anthem, says the company is trying to find temporary jobs within the organization for their hourly workers.

Singer Alice Cooper was in Germany when his tour "basically collapsed," he wrote in an email. With his North American spring dates indefinitely postponed, he

is now trying to figure out how to best help his crew, who aren't full-time employees and not covered under his insurance.

"We will be doing something for them," he said. "It's the right thing to do. A lot of our tour family has been with us for 10, 15, 20 years, and we are like a family. ... These things affect a lot of people, not just our band and crew and not just our fans, but the local venue workers, our bus and truck drivers and companies, sound and lighting companies and techs, hotels, airlines."

Streaming, leaving decimated musicians' traditional revenue streams, leaving touring one of the few ways anyone can make money. Even pre-pandemic, many established artists were holding on by their fingertips. Rock band Drive-By Truckers, who routinely sell out large theaters, were in the middle of the soundcheck for their March 12 Indianapolis show when it was canceled. "We're trying to respond and good citizens, and balance out doing the right thing for everyone's health and our fans, but we're trying to figure out how we're going to survive, it too," says vocalist Patterson Hood. "As a small business that doesn't exactly have a huge amount of reserves to fall back on, it's a very scary, precarious time right now."

Veteran musician David Crosby had planned to be on the road most of the year. "I'm not trying to whine about my situation," he says. "It's happening to everybody. It's happening to other people who can handle it even less well than I can, and I can't handle it very well. I don't have much in the way of savings or anything."

If he loses the lucrative summer touring season, Crosby worries, he and his family might lose their house. "If I have to sell some guitars, I will. That's the only thing I've got, and I will sell some if I have to, to keep it."

No one is sure when the funk might lift. Many artists plan to move their postponed tours to the fall, a touring season already so competitive, Alaina Moore likens it to "Mad Max." There might be more music than the market can hold, but talent agent Storch argues that there are fewer fans.

"We have two choices," he says. "We can sit in a corner and be terrified of what's going on, or we have to keep going forward. We've got to give everybody hope."

WEEKEND: MUSIC

The lost art of deep listening

Now is a good time to give your favorite albums your full attention again

BY RANDALL ROBERTS
Los Angeles Times

Musicians spend years making their albums. They struggle over syllables, melodies, bridges and rhythms with the same intensity with which you compare notes on the "Forensic Files" reboot, loot corpses in "Fortnite" or pound Cabernet during pandemicics.

But most of us are half-assed when it comes to listening to albums. We put on artists' work while we're scrolling through Twitter, disinfecting doorknobs or obsessively washing our hands. We rip our favorite tracks from their natural long-player habitat, drop them into playlists and forget the other songs, despite their being sequenced to be heard in order.

It doesn't have to be this way. There was a time when listeners treated the mere existence of recorded sound as a miracle. A wonder, a kind of time travel. Vintage images from the space age show couples seated around their high-fidelity systems as if being warmed by a fireplace.

The late experimental composer and teacher Pauline Oliveros coined the phrase "deep listening" for just this practice. Defining it as a kind of "radical attentiveness," she wrote, "I differentiate to hear and to listen. To hear is the physical means that enables perception. To listen is to give attention to what is perceived both acoustically and psychologically."

A Stravinsky symphony caused a riot. The least you can do is commit to deeply listening to three full albums.

Which is to say, go dig a ditch in your backyard, put your phone in a Ziploc bag and bury it. Get comfortable on the couch, which, ideally, is centered in the sweet spot between the speakers. No stereo system? Put on your headphones (pro-tip: Audio-Technica has become the recording studio standard) or earbuds, or lock yourself in a closet with your best bluetooth speaker. Whatever works.

Mindfulness is essential. Light a candle or, not.

Dimmed light will make the environment even better.

Set the volume at 8.5 and then make a pact with the voices in your head to shut up. Listen with your ears in the same the way you read with your eyes; absorb the flavor as you would (yet another) velvetine swig of Cabernet washing over your taste buds.

In 2006, the Staten Island rapper Ghostface Killah, best known as a founding member of Wu-Tang Clan, issued his fifth studio album. It's about wine's evil cousin, cocaine. Called "Fishescale," the album is an hourlong, Tarantino-style action-adventure film, and one of three albums I programmed for a recent night with music.

A conceptually linked, drug-slinging series of vivid, F-bomb-dropping narratives set in the Wu-Tang cinematic universe, "Fishescale" stars Ghostface under his Tony Starks pseudonym. Unlike the rapper's previous albums, though, for this one he stepped away from Wu-Tang producer RZA in favor of productions by legends including J Dilla, MF Doom and Pete Rock. The move broadens the landscape.

Snobs will tell you that you'll need the finest acoustic equipment. That's not the point here. In a blind test, you likely wouldn't be able to distinguish between a 320k Spotify stream and a 2006 pressing of "Fishescale."

As a writer, Ghostface is unparalleled. His love of wordplay, his urgent delivery and frantic phrasing move across bars with the singsong freedom of five-minute John Coltrane solos.

After a cuss-heavy intro, "Fishescale" commences with "Shakey Dog," a cinematic punch skin to a car chase opening an action movie. We're with Starks on the way to a robbery. He's in the backseat eating fish and dipping French fries into ketchup. He drops tartar sauce on his shoe, a portent that the advancing plot might not go as planned. By the end of the song, nearly a dozen people are dead and a bullet has grazed our hero's ear.

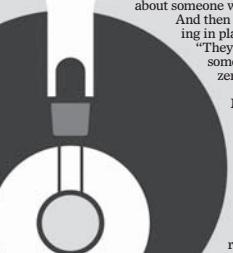
Across "Fishescale," the rapper's verses are dense with wordplay and references: cheeba weed brownies, "Sanford and Son," fried plantains and rice, centipede stab wounds, Pyrex scholars and extract oil cut from Cuban plants. He raps

that's your favorite album? When was the last time you listened — actually listened — to it from start to finish? With intention, like you were watching a movie or reading a novel.

Clear your schedule for the next three hours. Choose three full albums, whether from your collection or your streaming service of choice. Put them in an ordered queue as though you were programming a triple feature.

Because, listen:

iStock illustration



of professors at war and terry-clad Guess shorts; of a lover, whose "voice was a slow jam, full-length white mink," who seduced him in a room scored by Barry White slow jams and with cigarette smoke that "floated when it left her throat — spelled 'Honey'." As with every work of art, "Fishescale" is a portal, in its case into a space dense with action, urgency and invective.

Yes, you are still sitting on the couch, but you're also wandering in isolation through the fabric of someone's musical universe.

If "Fishescale" is a thriller, Aimee Mann's 2017 album "Mental Illness" is an expert series of vignettes whose characters are dealing with isolation and social distancing, even if it's not due to COVID-19. "Mental Illness" is about as far removed from "Fishescale" as "Twin Peaks" is from the "Fast & Furious" franchise.

The Los Angeles-based Mann is one of the city's most eloquent songwriters, and for this insular record she and producer Paul Ryan convey a sense of gentle effortlessness. Strum-propelled waltzes augmented with subtle string arrangements ("Stuck in the Past") ease into songs about abyss-leaning narrators. "Three thousand miles to sit in a room with a vanishing groom," she sings on "You Never Loved Me," a song about someone who gets ghosted after traveling to meet a fiance.

And then there's "Patient Zero." A song written long before sheltering in place became standard, its opening verse reads like a portent: "They served you champagne like a hero / When you landed someone carried your bag / From here on out you're patient zero / Smelling ether as they hand you the rag."

Turn the volume up to 9 as Ryan's arrangement builds. Measure by measure, he and Mann add texture: a gentle tambourine, plucked-string accents, a precisely placed kick-drum. Organized noise, made by experts in their field, resonating anew.

"Life is good / You look around and think / I'm in the right neighborhood," Mann sings as she seizes the narrative. "But honey you just moved in," she adds, as if predicting catastrophe. "Life is grand — and wouldn't you like to know what it goes as planned?"

If it had gone as planned, you wouldn't be reading this right now. But we are stuck inside. We don't know for how long. There are no sports. You have been scrolling through Netflix for an hour.

Give up. Let go. Things are falling apart, but there's still music.

On their epic 2011 double CD, "RE: ECM," the experimental electronic producers Ricardo Villalobos and Max Loderbauer were given the keys to the vault of the lauded jazz and contemporary classical label ECM Records. One-time home to artists including Arvo Part, Keith Jarrett, Meredith Monk, Jan Garbarek and dozens more, ECM possesses a catalog of master recordings that contains millions of musical tones: rhythms, wails, bass hums, snare snares, cymbal sizzles and synthetic boops and warbles.

Villalobos and Loderbauer built an abstract masterpiece from these measures. A haunting, minimal timbre of acoustically created tones and voices that the pair electronically recontextualized, each of the 17 pieces draws from specific ECM works.

"Rensenada," for example, uses as source material jazz multi-instrumentalist Miles Davis collaborator Bennie Maupin's classic 1974 album "The Jewel in the Lotus."

Among the players on the recording: Herbie Hancock on electric piano, bassist Buster Williams and a trio of percussionists including Billy Hart.

"Rekondakion's" source material is a sacred chorale by Estonian composer Part. Inhabiting it at full volume can be an overwhelming experience. Part composed the piece for the 750th anniversary of the Cologne Cathedral, but to hear it reworked by Villalobos and Loderbauer — to absorb it minus distraction — is to be transported to a place immune to anything nature can throw at us.

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS

Sadler Vaden

Anybody Out There? (Dirty Mag Records)

Jason Isbell has been really rocking lately in concert, and here's one reason: Sadler Vaden.

Isbell's lead guitarist has the chops to match licks with the boss, which is saying something. But "Anybody Out There?" — the follow-up to Vaden's 2016 debut album — is a tuneful power pop set that puts the emphasis on songs rather than solos.

It's also of another era. "Good Man" quotes Tom Petty.

"Tried and True" is built on Byrdsian jangle. "Modern Times" stirs fond nostalgia about MTV and wood blocks.

Vaden is equal parts John and George as he sings of love won, lost and under negotiation, displaying a versatile voice that's effective at both ends of the dynamic range. He urges positivity on the ballad "Don't Worry" and on the crunchy "Peace + Harmony," which he co-wrote with Aaron Lee Tasjan.

"Peace + Harmony" seems to end prematurely, just as the dance floor might be starting to stir. Vaden prefers concise approach elsewhere as well, launching into only a couple of long guitar solos, both beauties. Check out an Isbell show for more of those.

— Steven Wine
Associated Press



Lucky Bird Media

Justin Timberlake and various artists

Trolls: World Tour (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack) (RCA Records)

Even if you refused to see even a minute of 2016's animated film "Trolls," you've likely heard it. And for that, you can thank Justin Timberlake.

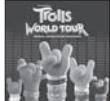
His "Can't Stop the Feeling!" was everywhere — at the Oscars, Grammys and Super Bowl, atop the Billboard charts and even in the presidential campaign that year. Can the sequel's soundtrack be more glitter-filled?

It can. It definitely can.

Timberlake is back (along with super-producer Max Martin) and they've got help from A-listers like Kelly Clarkson, SZA, Anderson Paak, Chris Stapleton and production assistance from Grammy- and Oscar-winner Ludwig Goransson. The result is a surprisingly dope soundtrack with a clutch of excellent songs in all genres that deserve a rich life outside the kiddie set.

To be honest, it wasn't that hard to improve on the original soundtrack, which was a mess, with cheesy covers — the nadir was Zooey Deschanel and Anna Kendrick doing "Mo' Money Mo' Problems" — that even the addition of a weak Ariana Grande song couldn't help. It was all about "Can't Stop the Feeling!"

But the sequel's soundtrack isn't reliant on a single song and takes the music more seriously, befitting a story about music's different genres. The one tune bravely trying to top "Can't Stop the Feeling!" this time is the



very addictive "The Other Side" with SZA and Timberlake.

Paak and Timberlake are back for the bubby,

gospel-tinged "Just Sing" and they're aided vocally by the eclectic group of Clarkson, Blige, Anna Kendrick and Keegan Thompson. Later Clarkson truly shines in a rufous banjo-led "Born to Die," a Stapleton-Timberlake knockout. That pair also wrote a fiddle-filled, foot-stomper "Leaving Lonesome Flats" and gave it to Dierks Bentley.

Like the original, there are plenty of "Glee"-like covers and "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend" star Rachel Bloom does three — Hearts' "Barracuda," Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" and the Scorpions' "Rock You Like a Hurricane."

Keep going and you'll dig up some oddball tunes, like the HAIM-written, Joan Jett-honoring "Rock N Roll Rules" and, weirdly, actor Sam Rockwell doing a cover of "I Fall to Pieces." Why poor Anthony Ramos was tasked with Daft Punk's "One More Time" is not clear. But then, right at the end, is another gem: "It's All Love (History of Funk)" with Paak, Blige and Clinton, which is a pure bliss. "Turn it up, louder!" go the lyrics and you'll find yourself — perhaps to your own amazement — jamming along to the new "Trolls" soundtrack.

— Mark Kinsley
Associated Press

Stephen Malkmus

Traditional Techniques (Matador Records)

Stephen Malkmus has gone folk. Sort of.

One year after the quasi-dance moves of "Groove Denied," he's back with "Traditional Techniques," an expansive exploration of the acoustic tradition.

The third record under his own name plays like a handbook for independent people and makes use of everything from autoharp to Afghani instruments. Friends like guitarist Matt Sweeney drop by to further the cause. The straightforward title holds credence, but this is really about the restive nature of his songwriting.

On "Brainwashed," Malkmus on: "I'm on the open idea plan." The track "Xian Man" backs that up with a zigzagging riff that will get etched into skulls upon repeat listens. The song crests when an electric guitar is set ablaze, uplifting the tune's galloping sway. The opener drifts into campfire sing-along, then rides out on a coda of Joy Pearson harmonizing with a spectral slide guitar. "Shadowbanned" is the truest outlier, a loping jaunt through our modernized landscape that comes off like a distant relative to Dylan's



"Subterranean Homesick Blues."

The clearer folk songs are things of wonder. "The Greatest Own in Legal History" details the parasitic nature of attorney-client relations in the most tender reading imaginable. The combination of touching vocals and glistening pedal steel will make fan mixtapes for years.

The clearer instrumental palette magnifies Malkmus' astute lyricism. He has an epiphany about someone "who steals in reverse," throws clever jabs — "I'm Miles Davis better than any of you" — and winking confessions: "We're not foolish adults anymore." On the boastful reflection "Amberjack," he admits to still being "into watching bridges burn."

Early on, Malkmus sings "I would like to represent you, be your verbal musician." As the voice of "traditional" indie rock for decades, he pretty much has. Continuing to age gracefully, he's made another exploratory sound effortless, making this one really easy to listen to.

— Jake O'Connell
Associated Press

NCT 127

The 2nd Album 'NCT #127 Neo Zone' (SM Entertainment/Capitol/Caroline)

NCT 127's sophomore album has something for everyone. It's a little bit sexy, a little bit warm, a little bit wild, a little bit of a hellion on the dancefloor, and a whole lot of unusual twists and swerves in the musical lines.

The 13-track record offers a K-pop buffet to the hungry listener, as the nine-member band tackles trap, rap, electronic dance and classic pop sounds on the new album. NCT 127, which stands for Neo Culture Technology, distinguishes itself from similar groups at SM Entertainment with quirky choices on a chorus here and an interlude there.

"Elevator (127F)" kicks it all off with a seemingly classic pop tune underscored by emotional violins and then subverts expectations with



some ragtime piano. "Day Dream" has a seductive percussion that makes your heart flutter, while "MAD DOG" pairs dirty guitar playing with rhythmic clicking. "Love Me Now" has a classic pop vibe with an uplifting flute bringing up the tempo in the background and "Not Alone" has an '80s guitar riff with an underlying R&B beat.

"Dreams Come True" is smooth piano pop and jazzy strings and trumpets. The album's ballad, "White Night," is a piano powerhouse with an underwater beat effect. It's all danceable and enjoyable despite its desperation to stand out by using classical instruments with a modern beat.

— Cristina Jaleru
Associated Press

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Star Wars: Episode IX - The Rise of Skywalker": Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) has made his way to Exegol, once the world of the Sith, where he encounters the evil Emperor Palpatine (Ian McDiarmid). Rey (Daisy Ridley), Finn (John Boyega) and Poe (Oscar Isaac) follow, in hopes of obtaining the pathfinder that will lead them to the desert planet and stop the First Order once and for all.

In the meantime, Rey grapples with her connection with Kylo Ren, wondering if the dark side is where she truly belongs.

There's so much to wrap up in this ninth installment of the beloved franchise, and boy does J.J. Abrams' and Chris Terrio's script try to pack it all in. (Abrams also directed the film.) Rose Tico (Kelly Marie Tran) only gets in a few lines, but we meet a new droid, D-O, among a cast of other new characters, including Keri Russell as Zorii and Naomi Ackie as Jannah. Cameos from the entire series abound, as does an almost frustrating number of plot twists that give the film an odd pulse through its final acts. The tone is inconsistent, and the story tends to negate the complexities of Rian Johnson's "The Last Jedi."

"It's adequate at best, a space-themed kiddie adventure with a few lessons about justice and hope and perseverance, which is how Star Wars movies started," wrote Tribune News Service critic Katie Walsh in her review. "'Rise of Skywalker' is the ultimate nostalgic throwback of them all, as a film that seems more appropriate for rereaching on VHS than anything else."

And here we are. If a distraction you seek, may the force be with you.

Also available on DVD:

"The Current War": Thomas Edison (Benedict Cumberbatch) and George Westinghouse (Michael Shannon) fight to make their respective electrical systems the one that will power the United States.

"Coda": After grieving his wife's death and returning to performing, a concert pianist (Patrick Stewart) faces crippling stage fright and mental decline.

"Mr. Robot: Season 4": The hit USA Network series starring Rami Malek as cybersecurity engineer-turned-hacker Elliot comes to a close.

"The Purge: Season Two": All crimes including homicide are declared legal for a 12-hour period in this USA Network horror series.

"VFV": A group of veterans fight a violent gang after a teenage girl hides out in the VFW bar with stolen drugs. Stars Stephen Lang, William Sadler, Martin Kove and Fred Williamson.

"Tommy Boy": The 1995 comedy starring Chris Farley and David Spade is being re-released for its 25th anniversary.

"What's My Name: Muhammad Ali": This HBO documentary follows the life and achievements of the iconic boxer.

— Katie Foran-McHale/TNS



CHIMERIC MEDIA LTD., PBS/AP

Historian Niall Ferguson is the host of "Niall Ferguson's Networld," a three-part series about social networks and how they have evolved throughout history and science with the help of technology and the internet.

By MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Historian Niall Ferguson has a knack for timing his TV projects. He debuted his examination of the global financial system in "The Ascent of Money" just as the 2008 economic crisis was hitting. Now he has returned with a series that helps us better understand the coronavirus.

"Niall Ferguson's Networld" from PBS is a look at the rise of online social networks like Facebook and Twitter, but it also explores the same principles that are a matter of life and death as the globe confronts a killer virus.

"Whether it's a financial crisis or a pandemic, you can find very similar dynamics," he says. "You're dealing with the ways in which things go contagious through social networks."

The three-part series — streaming now on its PBS site, on the PBS Video app and on YouTube — shatters the cool facade of Silicon Valley. Ferguson looks into world history to find similar disruptive technologies like the printing press and telegraph and reveals principles of network science to show that the internet follows ancient rules.

"There are many things about our world that are new and unprecedented, but actually technology has just made the networks bigger and faster," he says. "The underlying properties of social networks are the same as they were in Roman times."

The series is an engaging tour through the past and into science, skipping gracefully from Paul Revere, William Randolph Hearst and Ella Fitzgerald to the Reformation and studies about how crickets coordinate

"Whether it's a financial crisis or a pandemic, you can find very similar dynamics. You're dealing with the ways in which things go contagious through social networks."

Niall Ferguson
Host of "Niall Ferguson's Networld"

nate their sound. Ferguson has adapted from his bestselling book "The Square and the Tower."

Stephen Segaller, the vice president of programming at WNET, who has collaborated with Ferguson on several series, said "Niall Ferguson's Networld" manages to make exciting some very abstract ideas.

"I think he gathered together a lot of smart threads to create this overall picture," Segaller said. "This was a huge challenge. In other series, Niall has been striding across landscapes — walking through the Forbidden City or standing in Sarajevo talking about history — but with this series, the challenge was it doesn't take place in any physical spaces to speak of."

Ferguson admits he initially bought into the promise of the internet — that it could create a global community; a utopia, even. But the more he looked at it, the more he saw the downsides — the undermining of democracy, the swift movement of noxious content, the rise of billionaires like Mark Zuckerberg at the top of the pyramid.

"We definitely were very susceptible to the Silicon Valley Kool-Aid that once we

were all connected, everything would be awesome. I believed that for a time," he said. "I'm pretty sure most people did because email was so cool and websites were so amazing. And Google was such a boom. And Facebook was astonishing. We were very, very disinclined to think that there could be downsides."

He suspects many people seem to think they are getting free services from online hubs like Google and Facebook. In fact, we are actually handing over to them our personal information, and much too easily.

"I think we've slightly misunderstood the central relationship in the internet age, which is we give our data and we get services in return. We're really underpricing our own personal data."

Ferguson, who holds posts at both Stanford University and Harvard, found in network theory answers to why the internet breeds division, why the rich get richer and why bad and false stuff moves so much quicker — like a contagion.

That brings him back to the coronavirus. The TV series makes clear that everyone has their own personal social network, and it determines the probability of getting sick in 2020.

"You have to understand you are a node in a network and if you are still going out to dinner or going to parties or still seeing a whole bunch of friends, then you're really massively increasing your risk of getting this virus," he said. "The point of doing the series was to say there's just one grand theory of networks that applies to everything. And if we only understood it as ordinary folks, we wouldn't be making a bunch of mistakes, like the mistakes that we're making right now."

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



Application Systems Heidelberg, Coconut Island Games

Luna The Shadow Dust enchants with hand-drawn visuals as it sends players through a mysterious storyline.

Illuminating the dark shadows

Point-and-click puzzler Luna the Shadow Dust builds intrigue, interest without using dialogue

By CHRISTOPHER BYRD
Special to The Washington Post

During the early 1990s, point-and-click adventures made by companies such as LucasArts and Sierra Entertainment were among the most visually arresting games available. I used to persevere through their (sometimes obscure) puzzles because I wanted to see what sights lay beyond the next bend. (Back then, I used my uncle's Compuserve account to check message boards for tips.)

Developed by a small team of four people, *Luna The Shadow Dust* is an enchanting point-and-click adventure that reminded me of the old "let me just get to the next screen" impulse. From the start, its beautiful hand-drawn visuals, dreamlike puzzles and mysterious storyline — which unfolds without a word of dialogue — drew me in and held my interest until the credits. Perhaps not since "Forgotten Anne" has a game so skillfully adopted the textures of animated films in its moment-to-moment gameplay.

Luna The Shadow Dust opens with a boy plunging through the air from a great height as a ghostly entity tries to catch up with him. Closing the distance between them, the entity transforms into a bubble that encapsulates the boy and slows the velocity of his fall before depositing him gently on the ground amid a desolate, nocturnal landscape. The bubble reverts into a small, glowing light that follows the boy as he gets to his feet and moves about. Players are introduced to the game's shadow mechanics when the boy approaches

a rock on the ground. Its surface bears the shadow of the gnarled plant that's next to it on which rests the shadow of an otherwise unseen bird. When the boy tries to walk past the rock, the shadow bird squawks, causing the luminous entity to shrink back.

The boy swiftly fixes the situation by kicking over the plant, riddling the rock of the offending shadow. A few paces away, the boy comes upon a door that's not attached to any building. Opening it, one sees nothing but the nearest area beyond its frame. Since the initiative, the entity flies over to a lantern that hangs from a branch of a leafless tree. Lighting the lantern causes a sprawling tower to rise up around the door. It's only at the end of the game, when the boy reaches the top of the tower, that the simple but carefully obscured story becomes clear.

Entering the building, the boy comes to a room where a faded mural runs the length of a wall. Standing in front of the mural's various sections causes them to effervesce with color, which in turn unlocks a door at the end of the chamber. It struck me as fitting that a game so distinguished by its art style should incorporate a mechanic of looking. Thus, in another close-by room, adorned with framed paintings along its walls, the boy must stand before four different paintings then exit the room, either to the left or the right, in a manner specific to each painting, to unlock another portion of the tower.

On a balcony, the boy encounters a magical catlike creature buried beneath the debris from a collapsed shelf. Upon



freeing the creature, players can click back and forth between the boy and the animal. The animal can dive into the shadows and become a living shadow itself. As such, a number of the game's puzzles require players to manipulate the shadows along a wall so that the critter can get around to different places. In shadow form, the animal can only move where other shadows exist. The puzzles in the game are cleverly conceived. I liked, for example, sending the furry critter into the pages of an illuminated manuscript. There, it meets people who make requests for specific texts, which the boy must then retrieve from a cavernous library by hopping on a small track cart.

Although in the interest of time, I looked up a couple of puzzle solutions online, I never felt the solutions to be unduly unfair. This is not a game inflated by needless filler to inflate its running time. *Luna The Shadow Dust* belongs in the spotlight.

Platforms: Mac and PC
Online: lantern-studio.com

Delay of games? Virus concerns complicate production schedules

Modern-day video game consoles, from their packaging to controllers and especially the devices themselves, are made up of many disparate parts from all over the world. These components could soon become a big problem for console makers planning to release their next generation of products this holiday season.

The spread of coronavirus, classified March 11 as a pandemic by the World Health Organization, stands to threaten the normal production of many of these components. Running the gamut from heat management components to voice sensors, from haptic feedback motors to power cords, from the console's plastic shell to the cardboard packaging it is sold in, these parts are manufactured by and supplied to console makers by companies all over the world. These companies are, in turn, supplied parts by other companies. These links of companies and shipping intermediaries are known as the supply chain.

A complication at one point in a supply chain can have significant ramifications for companies downstream. But this effect is amplified during a global pandemic, when containment efforts can slow down production in many countries at once. This is already true of supply chains with links running through Southeast Asia and China.

When examining the types of intermediate products that China produces, "electronics and just electrical equipment in general were the most vulnerable segments of the supply chain," said Gregory Daio, the chief U.S. economist at Oxford Economics in an interview last month with *The Washington Post*. "If you look at some of the employment data for the region, you see that essentially, everything that pertains to electronics and IT equipment — and semiconductors are in there — are some of the most exposed."

It is difficult to predict how coronavirus will impact the production of video game consoles, especially the next generation of consoles like Microsoft's Xbox Series X and Sony's PlayStation 5, tentatively slated for the 2020 holiday season. But the pandemic is already proving to be a test for the companies involved. Last month, Bloomberg reported that Nintendo would have difficulty supplying Switch consoles to the U.S. and Europe due to coronavirus-related supply chain complications.

"Everyone is panicked," said Rui Zhang, general manager at Lorom, which makes cords and is listed as a top supplier to Microsoft. "I don't even know who has the time to forecast or look at the next four or five months."

Working from a list of Microsoft's top 100 suppliers, The Post contacted 38 companies around the world involved in some part of the video game console or peripheral manufacturing process. When asked about anticipated delays, answers ranged from cautious optimism, to boilerplate wait-and-see "we're monitoring" language, to concerns regarding months-long delays and a possible recession.

Lack of information is a key challenge. Understandably, no company had a clear sense of how its business would be impacted by the outbreak. That uncertainty alone may hurt companies and workers down the line.

— Mikhail Klimentov
The Washington Post

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Staying productive at home

Domestic achievements can help create a sense of order amid the chaos

By NICOLE ANZIA

Special to The Washington Post

Now that the coronavirus has sent workers and students home, closed businesses and canceled events, it's going to be important to create new routines and find meaningful ways to spend our long days at home. The following organizing tasks are simple and will help you structure your day and create a small sense of control.

Order picture frames and albums: Do you have a stack of photos you have been meaning to put in frames or photo albums? If so, take a few minutes online to find options that will work for you, and place the order. Depending on how long social distancing lasts, you may even have time to put those photos into the frames and albums.

Send notes: Write those thank-you cards that you have had on your to-do list for the past few months. If you don't have any thank-you notes to send, just send a few written notes or cards to friends. It will make you feel good to keep up some connection offline, and the recipient will be thrilled to open some real mail.

Organize and minimize your inbox: Spend 15 minutes deleting and filing emails. You'll be amazed at how much you can tighten your inbox in a small amount of time. For bonus points, do this every day for a full week.

Wash and store winter items: Wash winter coats, hats and gloves that are launderable. Set aside for donation those items that your family members have outgrown, and properly store the rest.

Meal planning: The upside to not sending kids to school and not going into an office is that you don't have to pack lunches. On the other hand, with everyone at home, you will have to make three meals a day. Spend 20 minutes one day a week thinking through lunches and dinners. This will make mealtimes feel less stressful and rushed, and you can make sure you have everything you need in advance. With stores having uneven inventory, ensuring you can prepare what you want is important.

Wash backpacks and reusable bags: When is the last time you washed your kids' backpacks and any of



Before

the reusable tote bags you bring to the grocery store or on errands? For most people, the answer is never, but now you have time to get them cleaned up and germ-free. Will this change your life? No. But it will feel good for both you and your kids to start fresh when normal life resumes.

Clean your car: If you have a car, this is the perfect time to clean it. This activity has the extra bonus of getting you outside for a portion of your day. Start by taking everything out, and then wipe down the surfaces and vacuum the floors and seats. Finish by cleaning the windows inside and out. This is something kids can help with.

Deep-clean your kitchen cabinets: This is an activity that you don't have to do all at once, but it will keep you busy for 30 minutes each day for a couple of days. Take things out of your drawers and cabinets and wipe down the insides. Put items that you no longer want or use in a bag for donation, and toss expired food. Put things back neatly. Wipe down both the inside and outside of your cabinet doors and all of the pulls, too.

Move furniture in one room and clean: Get some help from other family members to move your family room or living room furniture and clean underneath, either with a vacuum or Swiffer. While you're at it, take the cushions off the couch and chairs and vacuum them, too.

Refresh your bookcases: Take all the books and items off one bookshelf in the house. Put books that you no longer want in a bag to donate, wipe down the shelves and put everything back in a new configuration.

Write down goals for the rest of 2020: Some of us made a list of goals at the beginning of the year, but if you didn't, now is a good time to make one. It will help you visualize life after the coronavirus and help you prioritize in the coming months. If you already have a list, take a look and revise as necessary. If you're making a new list, be sure to include larger home projects you would like to complete, ideas for things you want to do with your kids and professional goals.

Streamline your bill-paying: If you're still a holdout to online bill-paying, this is the perfect time to get set up. If you're just getting started, entering the information for all of your payees does take a while, but you don't have to do it all at once, and the time you spend now will save you countless hours later. If you already have online bill-pay, take a look at your recipients to make sure they're current, and add any new vendors. Alternatively, call the companies you pay each month and set up automatic bill-pay through them.

Many of us have wished for more time at home to get things done, and, well, now we have it. Using this opportunity to do some cleaning and organizing will not only make you feel more in control and save you time later, but it will also give you a sense of renewal and accomplishment.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Gratitude in a time of uncertainty, fear

By the time you read this, what I've written will be a mere time capsule — a frozen moment in our ever-changing sociological and physiological status. Columns are supposed to be timely, but with a new chronicle being made in hourly increments since the coronavirus outbreak, this week's musing is bound to be old news. So, consider this a history lesson. A look back at "the old days" of last week, when life was entirely different than it is today.

About a week ago, I was in a Latin bar in Key West, Fla., in a conga line with my teen daughter and a horde of sweaty strangers, dancing and laughing, entirely carefree. A few days later, the governor of Florida announced the mandatory closure of all bars and restaurants across the state to combat the global coronavirus pandemic.

At the Key West airport, waiting for the flight home from our ill-timed mother-daughter spring break trip, I wafted between thoughts of cautious indignation and secret panic as news blared on an overhead television.

"Everyone must be overreacting," I mumbled to my daughter, Lilly, with a dismissive huff. "I read that at least half a million people die of the flu every year, but over 95 percent of people infected with coronavirus recover, so why should everything shut down?"

Lilly, who I had insisted wear gloves and a scarf over her mouth and nose while traveling, shrugged. A minute later, a woman nearby coughed. Lilly and I glanced anxiously at each other. With gloved hands, I pulled my own scarf up over my nose, my eyes darting suspiciously.

Was I overreacting, too?

As husband picked us up at the airport. On the way home, he updated us on the state of emergency in our area. "I'm working from home until further notice, your hours at the library have been cut, we have to pick up Anna from college because her classes are online for the rest of the semester, and we have exactly twelve and a half rolls of toilet paper left at the house."

At home, we laughed about how ridiculous people were acting, but our underlying instincts told us to gather our family into the safety of our nest and hunker down.

The next day while imposing my own self-quarantine, my mind continued to waver between skepticism and dread over news reports. Between pity and pride in human beings. Between greed and gratitude for our personal belongings. Between confidence and concern over our finances.

Gun sales soared, stocks plummeted, schools closed, hospitals filled, death tolls rose. Yet governments acted responsibly, citizens volunteered, an economic stimulus package was enacted, and random acts of kindness abounded.

By the end of the day, I needed a break from thinking about serious things. I'd cook a comforting home-cooked meal for my family, and we'd all watch a movie. For a couple of hours, we'd pretend like things were like they used to be.

While I had been in Key West, my husband had gone to the base commissary to stock up on "the essentials." I opened the fridge to find two cheap frozen pizzas, sports drinks, a bag of oranges, a head of iceberg lettuce, salami, a loaf of bread, milk, eggs and various half-used condiments.

Ironically, the sparseness of our food supply made me suddenly realize what I'd taken for granted. I found a wrinkling yellow pepper and a red onion to spruce up the pizzas. The radishes and carrots in the back of the vegetable drawer were still good, so with a half-bottle of Italian dressing, I made a tossed salad, too.

I still wanted to believe that the pandemic was just an overreaction, but as my family ate, I knew that, real or not, this crisis would reset my values. I would be grateful for family, for neighbors, for the military, for healthcare workers, for my job at the library, for my hairdresser who covers my grays, for restaurants, for first responders, for wrinkled peppers, for frozen pizzas ... and yes, for twelve and a half rolls of toilet paper.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesofflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesofflife@googlemail.com



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WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

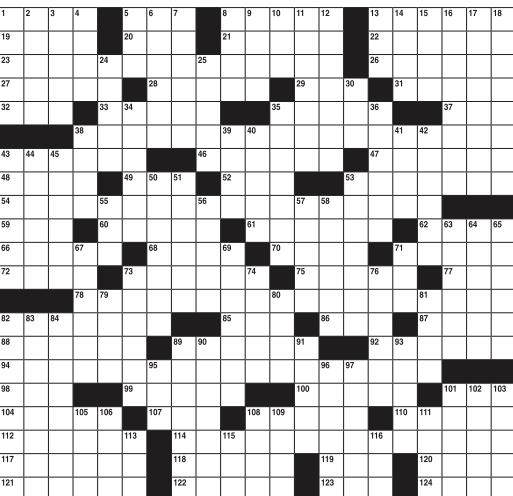
READY, SET ... GETS LOW!

BY NANCY STARK AND WILL NEDIGER / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Nancy Stark of New York City is a writer, lyricist and former editor for the Literary Guild book club. Will Nediger of London, Ontario, is a professional crossword constructor. They met through a notice that a friend posted on Nancy's Facebook seeking a collaborator. Nancy came up with this puzzle's theme and wrote most of the clues. Will did the grid. This is their third collaboration for The Times but their first Sunday together. —W.S.

CROSS

- 1 Palindromic band with the palindromic song title "SOS"
- 5 Place for oxygen tent, for short
- 8 A whole bunch
- 13 High-level H.S. math class
- 19 Exploit
- 20 Dandy
- 21 Like many barrels
- 22 "Yay!"
- 23 Cheer for beer on campus?
- 26 Milan-based fashion brand
- 27 Skate effortlessly
- 28 Put down in print
- 29 Part of a strip
- 31 West of Chicago
- 32 Discerning judgment
- 33 Author Calvin
- 35 Played the fall guy?
- 37 Half-____ (rhyming order)
- 38 Hunt at an out-of-focus nature photograph?
- 43 Chicago University
- 46 Small three-legged table
- 47 Two-time best actor, 1954 and 1972
- 48 "____ Old Cowhand" (Bing Crosby hit)
- 49 Put away
- 52 "If you ask me," briefly
- 53 Something populists revile
- 54 Antsy feeling when one is out of cellphone range?
- 59 Sport
- 60 One of the dames in 2018's "Tea with the Dames"
- 61 Like the lion slain by Hercules
- 62 Cans
- 66 "Tilted Arc" sculptor Richard
- 68 Jackie on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
- 70 Places to sleep
- 71 Spanish-omelet ingredient
- 72 Isaac's firstborn
- 73 Fought
- 75 Bête ____
- 77 Counterpart of frost
- 78 Where a demanding dockworker gets supplies?
- 82 Snack item with a salient anagram?
- 85 Word that's its own synonym in reverse
- 86 Symbol of danger or anger
- 87 Boot
- 88 Discriminating against elders
- 89 They've got talent
- 92 "Ditto!"
- 94 Landing in Rotterdam?
- 98 Curry or Rice
- 99 Snack items with their name on the top and bottom
- 100 Result of union negotiations, often
- 101 Lotion-bottle abbr.
- 104 Native seal hunter
- 107 Part of a college application, informally
- 108 Unfeeling
- 110 Roaster or toaster
- 112 It's not legal
- 114 Piano that plays only a certain three notes?
- 115 Slips
- 118 "Fingers crossed!"
- 119 Wrath
- 120 A long time ago
- 121 Willie Mays phrase
- 122 A little tight
- 123 Pseudoscientific subj.
- 124 Charon's river
- 134 "Fie ____" Matisse work that hung upside down at the Museum of Modern Art for 47 days
- 135 Rested
- 136 World capital settled by Vikings circa the ninth century
- 138 Scourge
- 139 Aprt rhyme for "constraint"
- 140 Martin Sheen's real first name
- 141 Name of seven Danish kings
- 142 "Le ____" Matisse work that hung upside down at the Museum of Modern Art for 47 days
- 143 Neglect
- 144 Acts dramatically
- 145 Bakery/cafe chain
- 149 Requiring difficult pedaling, say
- 150 Exclusive
- 151 Pseudonymously
- 153 Mammy's last name on "Modern Family"
- 154 Slip through
- 155 "Of course!"
- 156 Bill padding
- 157 Time out?
- 158 Stuffed and deep-fried rice balls, in Italian cuisine
- 159 Name-tag holders
- 160 Political system with a paramount leader
- 161 Vocal quintet?
- 162 More or less
- 163 Work well together
- 164 Translation of the French "vivre" or German "leben"
- 165 Rested
- 166 World capital settled by Vikings circa the ninth century
- 167 "Fingers crossed!"
- 168 "Name's the same."
- 169 "Hear me out."
- 170 "I'm not the only one."
- 171 "____ Got the Whole World in His Hands."
- 172 "Two Sisters" or "Two Young Girls at the Piano"
- 173 Attended
- 174 Alternative to a snake
- 175 Catch waves
- 176 Nickname on "The Addams Family"
- 177 Cloth that may get a lot of tears
- 178 "Like a bowl"
- 179 Cheat, informally
- 180 Quaintly countified directly
- 181 Suggested intake level, for short
- 182 Glass fragment
- 183 Tractor dumplings
- 184 New England fish
- 185 Dark
- 186 Catch-22" pilot
- 187 Cloth that may get a lot of tears
- 188 Bugs Bunny, e.g.
- 189 Sob stories
- 190 Virtually animals in an early 2000s fad
- 191 "Here, move over!"
- 192 Not much at all
- 193 Sundance state
- 194 Place for un bêté
- 195 Stock sounds
- 196 Bit of sun
- 197 Short flight
- 198 Informal affirmative

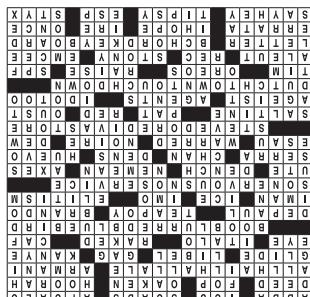


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and visit gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



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FACES

By ELAHE IZADI
The Washington Post

Maura Quint's self-isolating days in Pennsylvania are packed with full-time work and home-schooling her two young children. So, exhausted one evening last week, she put her kids to bed and mindlessly flipped on the TV.

A character walked out of a building and onto a busy street packed with people, getting lost in the crowd. It shocked Quint.

"Without even noticing it, I was panicking in the same way as watching a horror film and you have that tense, feeling that you're about to be murdered," she said. "I had to check myself: Why am I upset? Oh, now I've conditioned myself to see that as a threat as much as I'd see Freddy Krueger or some terrible beast as a threat."

On television, scientists, journalists and chyrons keep warning us that the most important, civic-minded thing to do in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic is to stay away from other people. And then we change the channel or queue up Netflix for a reprieve and all we see are friends hosting big parties, shaking strangers' hands and oh, dear God, touching their faces. There is no Purell in sight and a shocking lack of hand-washing.

The contrast between our reality and our entertainment captures how swiftly life has changed. Television shows, movies and commercials filmed and finalized just months ago are now artifacts of a simpler time, one in which the term "social distancing" sounded less like a way to save lives and more like a Goop-approved retreat.

TV and streaming services "provide an important health benefit by allowing people to get away from the crisis they're experiencing ... and go into this fantasy, fictitious world for a couple of hours," said Paul Levinson, a communications and media professor at Fordham University. "But to some extent, that's now even being undermined," because viewers notice the absence of the coronavirus on shows they watch.

"It's very hard to switch from, 'You're not supposed to be too close to anyone,' to 'here's a show where everyone's frolicking in a pool or bar or on the street,'" Levinson added. "That's diminished the value of television as a vehicle of escape."

People experiencing such dissonance have embraced the need to put public health first. They are staying home to isolate so they can slow the spread of the novel coronavirus and not overwhelm the health-care system.

It's a message that Steve Carbone, who has been socially isolating in Texas, "can't think about it right now," even as he caught up last weekend on episodes he missed of "Curbs Your Enthusiasm" and "This Is Us."

"It's just clear that these shows were taped before the guidance. Yet every single scene where it seems like social distancing is being violated, I think, 'Oh, it doesn't look right.' Or I wonder what it'd be like if they filmed it now," he said. "That's all 'This Is Us': people being together and hugging."

Carbone tweeted about the surreal experience, and more than 6,000 people liked it.

David Cohen in Pennsylvania has been having a particularly hard time watching commercials right now. He and his wife find escape through shows such as "HomeLand" and "This Is Us," but then he'll see ads for cars or cruise lines.

"It's almost feels like every commercial where you see lots of people together doing



From wire services

Gaga delaying album release

Lady Gaga won't be dropping her highly anticipated new album, "Chromatic," next month as planned. Initially scheduled for April 10, the release has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The "Shallow" singer and actress announced on her social media Tuesday morning that she is pushing back the album's release indefinitely.

It joins a list of other high-profile album postponements, including Haim's "Women in Music Pt. III," Alicia Keys' "Alicia" and Willie Nelson's "First Rose of Spring."

In her lengthy post, Gaga also revealed that she'd been planning a surprise Coachella performance this year before coronavirus concerns postponed the festival from April to early October.

"This is such a scary and hectic time for all of us, and while I believe art is one of the strongest things we have to provide joy and healing to each other during times like this, it just doesn't feel right to me to release this album with all that is going on during this global pandemic," Gaga wrote.

Gaga released the album's first single, "Stupid Love," at the end of February.

Other news

■ AMC announced Tuesday that its signature series, "The Walking Dead," will end its current season one week earlier than planned, due to the coronavirus shutdown. A statement from AMC said that the current season would end with the 15th episode, which airs April 5 statewide. According to the network, the planned finale of the postapocalyptic saga will appear "as a special episode later in the year."

■ The South by Southwest Film Festival announced its jury prize winners Tuesday. The juries that decided on those prizes are among the only people to have seen the winning films, because the festival, originally scheduled to run from March 13-21, was canceled. The narrative feature competition award went to Cooper Raiff's "Sh-house," while the documentary feature competition award went to Katrine Philip's "An Elephant in the Room."

■ The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony will go ahead in November, six months after its original date. The ceremony will take place on Nov. 7 at the Public Auditorium in Cleveland, HBO announced Tuesday. Whitney Houston, The Notorious B.I.G., Depeche Mode, The Doobie Brothers, Nine Inch Nails and T. Rex are set to be inducted in the 2020 class.

■ The 74th Tony Awards have been postponed indefinitely. The Broadway-lauding ceremony was scheduled to air on CBS, broadcasting live on June 7 from Radio City Music Hall in New York City. It was announced Wednesday that the event will be rescheduled at a later date.

■ The Golden Globes will accept movie submissions without a theatrical release for the first time due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association announced Thursday. The press association said films that are first released on television or a streaming service will be eligible for January's Globes. Usually, the Globes mandate that a film play for a week in a Los Angeles theater or on pay-per-view, as well as have an official screening for its voting members.

A different world

All over our TVs, characters are behaving in ways we've been teaching ourselves not to since the global coronavirus threat began



People preparing for a cruise? That's not a vacation aspiration; that's a plot setup for a horror movie.



Teens can forget about cuddling with their significant others these days, as in this scene from "This Is Us."

things that are a lot of fun feels tone-deaf," he said. "They're meant for another time when we had the freedom and bandwidth to spend money on frivolous things or things that would bring us into such close contact with other people."

Cohen understands that commercials are needed to support programming, but it's jarring, in the same way as it's jarring to sit on the porch on a nice early spring day — and then have to bring yourself back to remembering we're in the middle of a pandemic, and much of this country is in the middle of social distancing and shutting down."

Shows that pride themselves on realism can be especially unsettling. Last Wednesday, Levinson and his wife sat down for their weekly viewing of NBC's Chicago-themed block of dramas, including "Chicago Med" (which has since shut down production and announced it will donate its medical supplies to Illinois' health department). The show takes place in a hospital with a medical team handling emergen-

cies, but it had nary a word about COVID-19. "It was bizarre," Levinson said.

Fictitious shows and movies that are far removed from reality, such as science fiction programs set a thousand years in the future, may offer viewers more of an escapist retreat, Cohen said. "The less realistic the television show, the less that kind of discordant effect sets in."

It may be annoying to not be able to forget the counsel of public-health experts even when we watch stuff like "Love Island." But there is a small glimmer of comfort within this: As a society, we are capable of changing our thoughts and behaviors when needed.

"It's fascinating to see how quickly we can adjust to what we consider normal," Quint said. "And I'm sure that shows us as well that we will be able to readjust back when it's time."

But for now, we'll continue to keep six feet apart and just deal with cringing at fictional characters who aren't doing the same.

"It's very hard to switch from, 'You're not supposed to be too close to anyone,' to 'Here's a show where everyone's frolicking in a pool or bar or on the street. THAT'S DIMINISHED THE VALUE OF TELEVISION AS A VEHICLE OF ESCAPE."

Paul Levinson

communications and media professor at Fordham University

STARS AND STRIPES

OPINION

Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher

Lt. Col. Sean Klimek, Europe commander
Lt. Col. Richard McClinic, Pacific commander
Caroline E. Miller, Europe Business Operations
Joshua M. Lashbrook, Pacific Chief of Staff

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor

Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
red.robert@stripes.com

Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com

Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores_sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erik Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
slavin.erik@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350; DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380; DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Caciolli, Washington Bureau Chief
caciolli.joseph@stripes.com
(+1)(202)886-0033

Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert Reissmann, Mideast Circulation Manager
robert.w.reissmann@mail.mil
scsirculation@stripes.com
DSN (314)583.9111

Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stripes.com
memberservices@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090; DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington

tel. (+1)(202)886-0003
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050

Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts

stripes.com/contactus

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Ernie Gates

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BY ADAM TOOZE
Special to The Washington Post

In trying to gauge the coronavirus crisis, we are all struggling for historical reference points. Which is the historical example to choose?

The turmoil in the financial markets and the talk of bailouts reminds us of 2008. But though the shock comes at the end of a long economic upswing, it is not organically related to that long period of growth. Some overstretched businesses are getting their comeuppance, no doubt. But even the airlines, the firms everyone loves to hate, are not to blame.

It isn't a black swan event, either. A pandemic risk was well-mapped by experts. We just chose to ignore them. And now we are making an unprecedented public policy choice to shut down the economy.

So, it like a war? References to World War II encourage feelings of patriotic mobilization. But mobilization is precisely not our goal. Nonessential sectors would be furloughed in a war effort, too, but their workers and plants would likely be rapidly reallocated to war duty. If COVID-19 were the kind of disease that required a broad-front medical mobilization, the military analogy might work better. After all, in 2020, health care, at 18%, already accounts for a far larger share of the U.S. economy than defense did at the time of Pearl Harbor. But, except for overstretched intensive care and respiratory care units, the health care system is shutting down, too. Even as medical staff are working to exhaustion and braving risks of infection, their employers, both hospitals and private practices, are facing financial catastrophe.

There are historical analogies to this kind of collective shutdown, but they are not predictive. In 1914, when Europeans deluded themselves into thinking that the

war would be over by Christmas, there was, at first, little mobilization and a rise in unemployment. The disruption was limited in scope and duration. No one dreamed of shutting shops or restaurants.

Grimmer analogies are to wars lost. The former Soviet Union in the early 1990s comes to mind. But that implosion reflected the disintegration of a failed economic system and stretched over decades.

Sometimes a useful thing for historians to do is point out when something seems radically new. That is our situation today.

The most optimistic recasting of the present crisis came recently from St. Louis Federal Reserve President James Bullard, who urged his fellow economists to view the output collapse as not something to fight against, but as akin to an investment, an investment in public health, the price for which is paid not in cash but in kind, in the form of enforced idling of labor and capital. This is helpful because it softens the idea of a shutdown into a kind of collective abstention from economic activity and thus opens the optimistic vista of restarting the economy just as it was before.

But though we are about to absorb \$2 trillion — nearly one-tenth of last year's GDP — onto the public balance sheet, and though this will be hailed as the biggest stimulus in history, its impact on the daily struggles of Americans amid the coming pandemic recession is uncertain.

An alarmingly large percentage of American families live paycheck to paycheck. Their margins of safety are so slim that even a brief period of reduced hours has long-term catastrophic effects. What savings they have will evaporate. Making them "whole," as well-heeled people like to say, will be extremely difficult. They were not whole to start with. Millions of people work in businesses that are similarly on the boundary between life and death. Checks

for \$1,200 and small-business loans are not going to fix that. It will not be enough for them to survive.

In a crisis, credit is crucial. It is the way economies bridge time. Faced with the coronavirus, some creditors will behave responsibly, playing their parts in absorbing some of the loss. But not all will. Not all can. They themselves are under acute financial pressure. That is what is rocking the financial markets.

Economists recognize that you can't undo the damage done by these kinds of shocks. They call it scarring. To have minimized this, we would have needed to prepare the financial world for the lockdown six weeks ago and have rolled it out comprehensively, with forewarning. We have already blown our chances of that. Estimates suggest a record-breaking 3.4 million Americans filed for unemployment last week, and this week's total will surely be higher. Each of those layoffs creates lasting damage.

And then think about the politics, first of fighting this virus and then recovering from it. In a fantasy world, it is possible to imagine that smoothly injecting \$2 trillion into the U.S. economy would be the beginning of a healthy national debate about priorities and where to go from here. But does that sound like the United States, not just in 2020 but any time in the past few decades?

We are where we are because we were too slow, because we allowed the virus to overwhelm us, because the resources of our government have been gutted and because our politics are dysfunctional.

In our circumstances, historical analogies can easily become a form of dangerous nostalgia. This isn't 1914. It isn't 1941. It isn't even 2008. It is 2020. So expect all hell to break loose.

Adam Tooze, author of "Crashed: How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World," teaches history at Columbia University.

Botched response means we're all socialists now

BY GARY ABERNATHY
The Washington Post

HILLSBORO, OREGON
Pundits are speculating on what impact the coronavirus pandemic will have on the presidential race, but we know the answer. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., or at least his philosophy, has won.

Our march toward socialism began incrementally decades ago. But our response to the coronavirus will lead to its permanent implementation after elected officials of both parties shuttered businesses, ordered citizens not to go to work and made clear that there would be more draconian measures to come. The delicate balance between freedom and risk was less than an afterthought as our economy was gutted in a matter of days.

Most disappointing of all has been President Donald Trump, who — after initially trying, rightfully, to calm the population and the markets — fell into line after a few days of attacks. Trump turned the country over to health professionals, who were understandably focused solely on the best medical remedies. Sadly, no one seemed to worry much about protecting the economy or ensuring civil liberties, which, yes, must be protected even in the face of a communicable disease.

The cause of all this upheaval was a virus that, according to Johns Hopkins, so far has killed no one under 10 and has a case mortality rate of 0.2% to 0.4% for people age 10-49, rising with age as people develop more underlying medical conditions — all the way up to 14.8% for people 80 and older. We were told that the closings and restrictions were the only way to protect

the most vulnerable among us. It would be interesting to poll the "most vulnerable" to determine whether they agree with wrecking the economy.

But the snowball started rolling, state by state. One directive led to the next. Millions were ordered home, where they wait for their government to tell them it's OK to come out. Without a doubt, some parts of the country were hit harder and needed to take stronger measures. But a one-size-fits-all mentality was disastrous, and we are only beginning to explore more nuanced ideas for mitigating the risk to seniors and others who are at heightened risk. In recent days, Trump has indicated he might soon reverse course and lift federal restrictions. It's already too late. The economy can't be turned on and off like a light switch.

We live in a world where politicians of both parties promise no pain and no consequences. That includes the president. As the push for a big intervention began, Trump vowed that hourly wage workers were "not going to miss a paycheck" and "don't get penalized for something that's not their fault."

In real life, bad things happen to us that aren't our fault, but we still have to find a way, usually on our own, to cope and recover. Only in the land of make-believe that is our government would anyone think that no one would miss a paycheck no matter how many businesses were closed or jobs were lost. Airlines and the hospitality industry can be rescued. Businesses large and small can get bailouts or low-interest loans. Millions of Americans will receive \$1,200 checks, maybe multiple times.

Without having every reason to believe that Uncle Sam would step in, perhaps gov-

ernors around the nation would have hesitated to close business and industry. We'll never know. Instead, they felt empowered to act with impunity, safe in the knowledge that no matter how many businesses were forced to close and people thrown out of work in the name of public safety, there would be a federal bailout.

And so they were right. This week, our leaders agreed to devote trillions of dollars to responding to this economic calamity of our own creation, spending at levels that will make the 2009 bailouts and stimulus package look like testaments to frugality. It will be what we do from now on.

In his 2019 State of the Union address, Trump said: "America was founded on liberty and independence — not government coercion, domination and control. We are born free, and we will stay free. Tonight, we renew our resolve that America will never be a socialist country." So much for that. We have crossed the Rubicon. When historians record the moment that the U.S. economy transitioned from free-market capitalism to democratic socialism, they will point to this week. Watching it all unfold has been like witnessing a plane crash in slow motion. When the smoke clears, what's left will be a feeble relic of the United States we once knew.

For months, the rising influence of big-government liberals such as Sanders, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., has caused many Democrats to worry that their nominee would be vulnerable to the label "socialist." They should no longer be concerned. We are all socialists now.

Gary Abernathy, a contributing columnist for The Washington Post, is a freelance writer and former newspaper editor based in Hillsboro, Ohio.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other state-side syndicates.

To tackle virus crisis, mimic an elite athlete's approach

The Baltimore Sun

Historically, it takes a war to postpone or cancel the modern Olympic Games. Since 1896, there have been three cancellations — the 1916 Berlin games (World War I), and the 1940 and 1944 games (World War II) in Japan, then Helsinki, Finland, and, for the latter games, London and Italy. That's a pretty high standard. There have been boycotts, but pretty much times from the rise of Adolf Hitler's Germany in 1936 to the post-Afghanistan invasion by the Soviet Union Olympics of 1980, which the United States and some of its western allies boycotted.

Tuesday's announcement by Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that he and the International Olympic Committee came to an agreement to postpone the summer games to the summer of 2021 at the latest came as no big surprise under the circumstances. But it should serve as a reminder that the coronavirus outbreak will not be over in a matter of days or even weeks. The Olympics were not set to open in Tokyo until July 24.

"The leaders agreed that the Olympic Games in Tokyo could stand as a beacon of hope to the world during these troubled times and that the Olympic flame could become the light at the end of the tunnel in which the world finds itself at present," the parties announced in a joint statement. That is a lovely thought. And it certainly is not the first time that world leaders looked to the world's largest sporting event to save global wounds.

Athletes are likely disappointed. World-class skills can be a perishable commodity. But they, perhaps better than most, understand the limits of the human body and the risks conducting the games would have presented to everyone involved including their families. Meanwhile, Japan is looking at a major economic blow. President Donald Trump is already given to comparing the battle against COVID-19 to a military conflict, positioning himself as a wartime president. In a sense, the delay of the Olympics supports that narrative.

But the Olympics will rise again. Just as the U.S. and other nations will emerge from these days and weeks of quarantine. People will get back to work. Schools will eventually reopen. The economy will bounce back. But there's a lesson in sports about health and injury. Athletes who have serious injury and try to get back in the game prematurely often suffer a far worse outcome, turning a sprained knee, for example, into a candidate for surgery. Patience is as much a part of competition as motivation. Coaches often call this "playing smart." Sometimes, you accept short-term setbacks in order to achieve long-term gain.

Preventing hospitals and other medical providers from being overwhelmed by COVID-19 victims, that's the goal here, that's the finish line.

Here's the best part of the Olympic postponement: It wasn't about politics. Organizers simply recognized that this was not the time. The risks were not worth the reward. Reason won the day. We cheer for elected leaders who approach the outbreak in the manner of an athlete looking to win the gold: Pay no attention to the complainers, don't get distracted by the unimportant, listen to expert coaching, focus on the goal at hand, recognize our limits and, of course, saying a little prayer never hurt.



KOJI SASAHARA/AP

A man walks in front of a Tokyo Olympics logo at the Tokyo metropolitan government headquarters building Wednesday. The Olympic torch relay was postponed Tuesday because the Tokyo Games themselves were pushed back to 2021.

Private companies know their processes best as they chip in

The Wall Street Journal

President Donald Trump can't do right by some critics no matter what he does. For three years he's been denounced as a reckless authoritarian, and now he's attacked for not being authoritarian enough by refusing to commandeer American industry. The truth is that private industry is responding to the coronavirus with out command and control by the federal government.

Last week Trump invoked the 1950 Defense Production Act that lets a president during a national emergency order business to manufacture products for national defense, set wage and price controls and allocate materials. On Tuesday the Federal Emergency Management Agency used the Korean War-era law for the first time in this crisis to procure and distribute testing kits and face masks.

But Democrats warn the administration to take over much more of the private economy. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Sunday tweeted that the federal government should "nationalize the medical supply chain" and "order companies to make gowns, masks and gloves." He has been echoed by Democratic governors and leaders in Congress.

Yet businesses across America are already chipping in where they can. Aerospace manufacturer Honeywell plans to hire 500 workers at its plant in Rhode Island, which currently produces safety goggles, to make millions of N95 face masks for medical professionals. 3M has doubled its global output of N95 masks and this week is sending 500,000 respirators to hot spots in the U.S.

Corporations including Apple, Facebook, Tesla and Goldman Sachs are donating millions of medical masks stockpiled for wildfires or a biochemical attack. Apparel manufacturers are repurposing textile mills to produce personal protective equipment. Hanes plans to manufacture masks using U.S. cotton at factories in El Salvador, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. Diverse supply chains can help businesses operate more flexibly during a crisis since they don't depend on any single country for materials or workers. That's why an America first or America only government supply order would be a mistake.

Maine-based Puritan Medical Products, one of America's top sources for nose swabs, says it has been rushing to keep up with orders even as some workers have become sick. Directing the company to produce more coronavirus swabs won't do any good if it can't get more workers and could create a shortage of flu tests if it has to di-

vert resources from other lines.

Businesses know their workforce capacities and supply chains better than the government — and how to retool them to maximize efficiency. Dozens of breweries and distilleries including Anheuser-Busch and Pernod Ricard USA are churning out hand sanitizer. General Electric plans to hire more workers to produce ventilators even while it lays off thousands in aviation. Cell phone manufacturer Bloom Energy is retrofitting hundreds of old ventilators for the state of California.

Ford said Tuesday that it would start assembling plastic face shields and work with 3M and GE to make respirators and ventilators. General Motors is also exploring how to use its global automotive supply chain to make ventilators. Ford's CEO said its ventilators could be available by June, and it isn't obvious that a government takeover of manufacturing would speed this up. It might make sense for the federal government to purchase supplies from manufacturers and then allocate them to hospitals and states with the highest need. But it doesn't make sense to order manufacturers to make nose swabs or chemical reagents for testing kits if they don't have the expertise or suppliers to do so.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can also help convert vacant hotels and college dorms into makeshift hospitals, as it is doing in New York. When this pandemic is over, one of the lessons is likely to be that the government should have done more earlier to purchase and surge medical equipment to hospitals.

But dictating to businesses now will lead to bureaucratic snafus and inefficiencies. Trump said Sunday "we're a country not based on nationalizing our business." That's the right impulse. America needs to emerge from this with a private economy intact and ready to grow again, not nationalized industries subject to bureaucratic and political control.

Loaded terms for coronavirus harm all, don't help recovery

The New York Times

We've been down this road before, too many times. In the 14th century the Black Death provoked mass violence against Jews, Catalans, clerics and beggars; when syphilis spread in the 15th century, it was called variously the Neapolitan, French, Polish and German disease, depending on who was pointing the blame; when the plague struck Honolulu in 1899, officials burned down Chinatown. And so on, down to our times, when epidemics like Ebola, SARS and Zika fueled animus toward specific regions or peoples.

Here we are in 2020, with Asians being assailed across the U.S. and around the world as purported sources of the "Chinese flu," the "Wuhan coronavirus" or simply the "foreign virus." Once again, a mysterious, fast-spreading and sometimes lethal disease is exacerbating racism and hatred — only now with the help of the potent megaphone of social media.

As the coronavirus has spread from its beachhead in Wuhan, China, old anti-Asian prejudices have sprung with it, from the "Yellow Peril" canard that led to the lynching of Chinese in the 1870s to stereotypes of Chinese as dirty and decrepit.

As The Times reported on Monday, Chinese Americans and other Asians lumped together with them by racists are being beaten, spat on, yelled at and insulted from coast to coast.

The U.S. is not alone in this blight of xenophobia. Japan's Kyodo News agency described similar incidents of anti-Asian bigotry wherever the coronavirus has struck: Asian students pelted with eggs in Leicestershire, England, or people in Egypt yelling out "corona" when passing Asians in the street. Vile posts on social media have made graphic threats in rants against Asians over the coronavirus.

However much mystery still surrounds the coronavirus, these are not the Dark Ages, and there really should be no reason to remind people that this terrible new virus makes no distinction among races or nations. Though it makes good medical sense to keep a distance from people who have been to an area with a high rate of infection — which today is effectively anywhere — it is foolish and malicious to hold the Chinese (or any other) people responsible for the spread of the virus, or to assume that they are somehow more likely to be its carriers.

A time of great fear and danger requires solidarity, humanity, sacrifice and hope, and not hysteria or hatred. That should be the message of the world's political, social, religious and corporate leaders as they race to find ways to cope with the lethal virus. Many leaders have done just that.

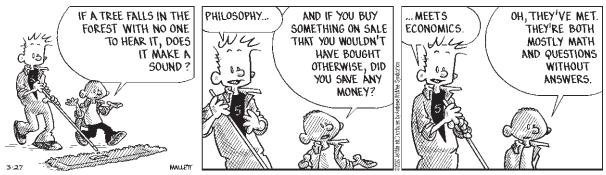
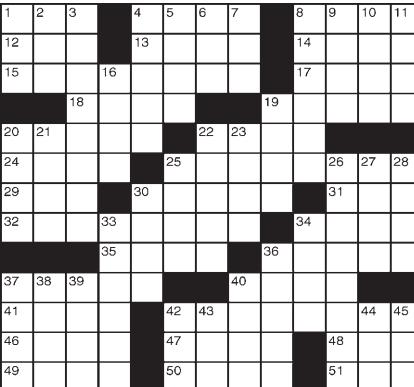
It is more than unfortunate, then, that President Donald Trump, some members of his Cabinet and some conservative politicians have opted to fan the bigotry by deliberately using the term "Wuhan virus" or "Chinese virus." Trump, who spent previous months calling it the "coronavirus," started defending the use of "Chinese virus" last week. Photographs of a text of the speech he was reading seemed to show "Corona" lined out and "Chinese" written in the president's hand. Trump tweeted support of the Asian American community on Monday, but his many supporters online had already embraced his formulation.

In tying the virus to China, the president has also adopted the strategy of Mike Pompeo, the secretary of state, that referring to Wuhan or China is payback for Chinese disinformation and for Beijing's delay in letting the world know of the outbreak. Of course, it is possible to hold the Chinese government accountable for its handling of the crisis and its spread of misinformation without maligning a nation of more than 1.3 billion people or the people of Chinese descent around the world.

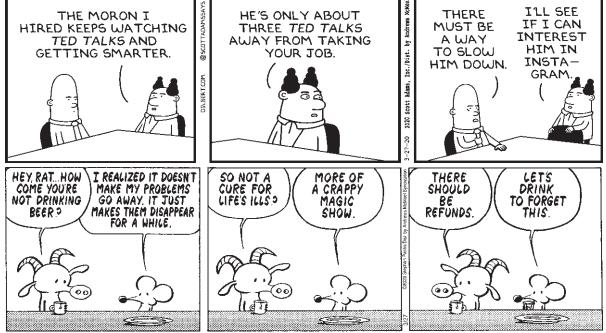
The xenophobia and prejudices that result from naming new infectious diseases after places, people or animals are the reasons the World Health Organization has urged against doing so, and instead using generic descriptive terms like "coronavirus." Names like Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, Spanish flu, swine flu or monkey pox, the WHO said, can have serious consequences, whether provoking a backlash against members of a particular community or prompting needless slaughter of food animals.

In the end, though, the hatreds spread by the coronavirus are not the product of politics, but of the deep fears that have always accompanied the outbreak of lethal pathogens. It is for all Americans to try, in whatever ways they can, to remain united and compassionate as the disease invades all facets of our lives.

Frazz

**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

Dilbert

**ACROSS**

- Guest's bed
- Floor cleaners
- Feng —
- Fiddle stick
- "East of Eden" girl
- Poker holding
- Played a bar game
- Writer Wiesel
- Scrabble piece
- Triangular letter
- Skirt style
- Quarrel
- Martin (cognac)
- Cabana site
- Leading lady?
- Lincoln's coin
- Petty peeve
- Like some glances
- Russian ruler
- Electronics giant
- Grab forcibly
- Flinch, say
- fu
- Celestial bear
- Unlikely winner
- Faux pas
- Entreaty
- Part of TNT
- Head, to Henri
- Crystal gazer
- Muppet eagle

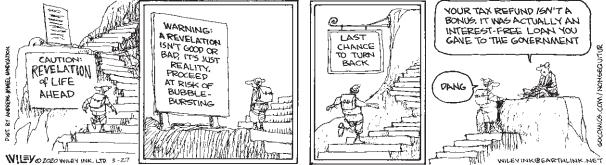
DOWN

- "Blue Bloods" network
- Sound of delight
- Cheated on
- Syrup flavor
- Reed instrument
- Expert
- Bando of baseball
- Bed linens
- Corridor
- Squad
- Notion
- Wee
- Emmy-winning Tyne
- War god
- Jeans maker
- Strauss
- Boxer Listen
- Ping—
- Drudge
- Perceptions
- Actress Cameron
- To be, in Tours
- Conspiracy
- Flee
- Till bills
- Tea sweetener
- Reddish brown
- Perry's creator
- were (so to speak)
- Patella site
- Vinyl records
- Flamenco cry
- Mouths (Lat.)
- Singer McGraw

Answer to Previous Puzzle

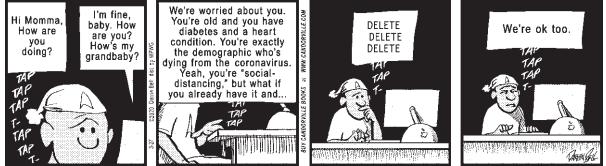
B	A	R	B	A	G	A	S	T	A	G
A	L	E	E	D	E	L	T	A	L	E
N	O	A	H	J	I	M	P	E	L	A
S	E	R	A	P	E	A	D	A	M	
P	E	P	P	Y	A	A	H	D	O	E
A	L	L	Y		B	U	S	R	I	N
L	O	U	T		E	D	N	E	C	K
M	I	N	U	S	I	S	G	I	N	S
G	N	A	T		R	E	U	B	E	N
C	H	E	F		M	B	A	M	Y	O
P	E	R	I		A	Y	N	E	K	S
R	E	S	T		N	E	T	D	U	D

Non Sequitur



B	A	R	B	A	G	A	S	T	A	G
A	L	E	E	D	E	L	T	A	L	E
N	O	A	H	J	I	M	P	E	L	A
S	E	R	A	P	E	A	D	A	M	
P	E	P	P	Y	A	A	H	D	O	E
A	L	L	Y		B	U	S	R	I	N
L	O	U	T		E	D	N	E	C	K
M	I	N	U	S	I	S	G	I	N	S
G	N	A	T		R	E	U	B	E	N
C	H	E	F		M	B	A	M	Y	O
P	E	R	I		A	Y	N	E	K	S
R	E	S	T		N	E	T	D	U	D

Candorville



3-27

Carpe Diem

**CRYPTOQUIP**

H N J F Z U U L F B S L J I B
B Z C L S D H G Q N F Z C J
N E L I - F H W D U Z Q , H B E Y Y Z B L
X Z E C H Q D S W J I I S D J S Y L J S X
S D L N S .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: FAMOUS ITALIAN FRIAR AND PHILOSOPHER WHO WAS QUITE GOOD AT HORSE RIDING: SAINT THOMAS EQUINAS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals R

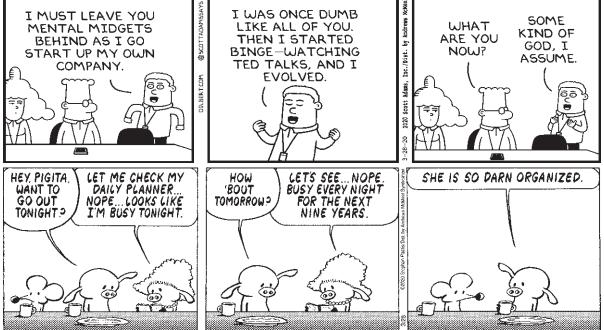
Bizarro



Frazz



Dilbert



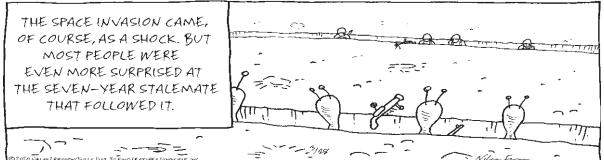
Non Sequitur



Candorville



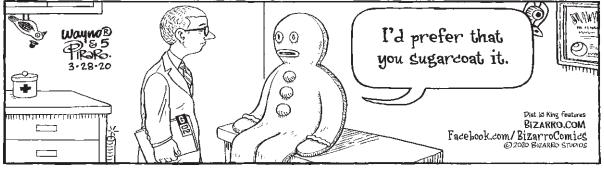
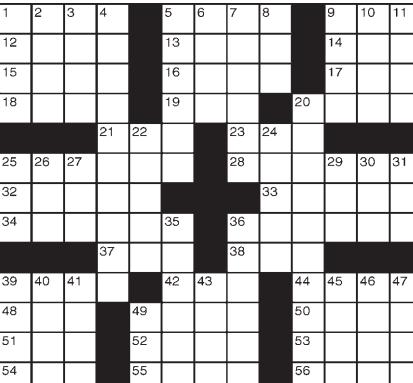
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro

**Eugene Sheffer Crossword****ACROSS**

- 1 Membership
5 Crooned
9 Average guy
12 Toy block name
13 Manitoba tribe
14 Strike caller
15 Choir voice
16 Soldiers in gray
17 Scot's refusal
18 Gamer's title
island
19 Buckeyes' sch.
20 Vocal quality
21 "2001" computer
23 Sign before Virgo
25 Pet rodent
28 Scents
32 January, to Juan
33 — Grows in
Brooklyn"
34 Supernatural
36 Rock concert
souvenir
37 Army address
38 Game caller
39 Corned beef
recipe
42 — Dhabi
44 Vipers
48 Barn bird
49 "Metamorphoses"
poet
50 Denny's rival
51 Pint-sized
52 TV journalist Lisa

Answer to Previous Puzzle

COT	MOPS	S	H	U	I
BOW	A BRA	H	A N D		
SHOT POOL	E L L I E				
T I L E	D E L T A				
A L I N E	S P A T				
R E M Y	P O O L S I D E				
E V E	P E N N Y	N	I	T	
S I D E	L O N G T S A R				
S O N Y	S E I Z E				
R E A C T	K U N G				
U R B S A	L O N G S H O T				
S L I P	P L E A T R I				
T E T E	S E E R S A M				

3-28

H N T ' E O E O R N D D O A P Q A B
G E Q Y Q A B Y V Q A B C P N G A
Y G Q R O Y N K Q P Q A
E O R K I I Q A B Y V O D I K Y O E ?
P T K I I H A N Y O P .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A ROBBER STEALS SOMETHING FROM A FUEL-RICH BOG, I SUPPOSE YOU MIGHT CALL THAT PEATY THEFT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals M



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Circulation

Kristi Kimmel kimmel.kristi@stripes.com
 +49(0)631-3615-9013 DSN 314,583,9013
 Robert Reismann reismann.robert@stripes.com
 +49(0)631,3615,9150 DSN 314,583,9150
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Kristi Kimmel kimmel.kristi@stripes.com
 +49(0)631-3615-9013 DSN 314,583,9013
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Deals

Wednesday's transactions

BALLSTADT RED SOX — Agreed to terms with 2B Yain Munoz on a minor league contract.

KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Designated LHP Eric Skoglund, assignment and compensation to be determined, RHP Trevor Rosenthal from the Los Angeles (PCL).

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Designated RHP Luke Jackson, LHP Ryan Buchter, OF Michael Hermosillo and LHP Jared Walsh to Salt Lake (PCL); Outfielder RHP Taylor Cole to Triple-A Sacramento (PCL).

FOOTBALL

National Football League

ARIZONA CARDINALS — Agreed to terms with DL Trevor Coley and RB DJ Foster on one-year contracts. Signed RFB.

ATLANTA FALCONS — Agreed to terms with TE Khari Lee on a one-year contract.

CAROLINA PANTHERS — Signed Terry Bridgewater to a three-year contract.

DETROIT LIONS — Signed CB Jalen Reagor on a one-year contract.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed DT Sheldon Richardson on a one-year contract.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Signed LE Kyle Wilcox.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Agreed to terms with DL Anthony Zettel and WR Tajae Sharpe. Agreed to terms with LB Mike Zimmer.

NEW YORK JETS — Agreed to terms with WR Eric Decker.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES — Agreed to terms with CB Nickell Robey-Coleman on a one-year contract.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Signed FB Derek Watt to a three-year contract.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed DE Keryn勇敢者 on a one-year contract.

TENNESSEE TITANS — Agreed to terms with CB Kevin Byard.

WASHINGTON REDSKINS — Re-signed LB Matt Orichard. Signed LB Thomas Davis, WR Marvin Jones, S D.J. Swearinger, CB Brendon Ayanbadejo, CB Devin Bowens, CB Delaney, S Montae Nicholson, CB Coty Sensabaugh and CB Kayvon Webster.

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

WICHITA REDSKINS — Re-signed LHP Matt Orichard. Signed LB Thomas Davis, WR Marvin Jones, S D.J. Swearinger, CB Brendon Ayanbadejo, CB Delaney, S Montae Nicholson, CB Coty Sensabaugh and CB Kayvon Webster.

Pro football

NFL calendar

April 17 — Deadline for restricted free agents to sign offer sheets.

April 23 — NFL Draft, Las Vegas.

May 1 — Owners' meeting, Marina del Rey, California.

June 1 — Training camps open.

Aug. 6 — Hall of Fame game, Canton, Ohio.

Sept. 5 — Fall of Fame induction, Canton, Ohio.

Sept. 5 — Final roster cutdown to 53.

Sept. 10 — Kickoff game to open regular season.

Sept. 13 — First full regular-season schedule.

Pro baseball

MLB calendar

TBA — Opening day, active rosters reduced to 26 players.

June 3-4 — Owners' meeting, New York.

June 10-12 — Amateur draft, Omaha, Neb.

June 13-14 — Chicago Cubs vs. St. Louis at London.

June 15 — International amateur signing period closes.

July 2 — International amateur signing period opens.

July 26 — Hall of Fame induction, Cooperstown, N.Y.

July 31 — Last day during the season to trade a player.

Aug. 1 — New York Yankees vs. Chicago White Sox at Dyersville, Iowa.

Aug. 22 — Baltimore at Willemstad, Curacao.

Aug. 31 — Last day to be contracted to an organization and be eligible for post-season play.

Sept. 1 — Active rosters expand to 28 players.

Sept. 29-30 — Wild-card games.

Oct. 20 — World Series starts.

Oct. 21-22 — Hall of Fame.

November TBA — Trading resumes, day after World Series.

November TBA — Deadline for teams to make qualifying offers to their eligible former free agents and free agents, fifth day after World Series.

December TBA — Free agency begins.

January TBA — Spring training begins.

February TBA — Opening day.

March TBA — Postseason begins.

April TBA — All-Star Game at Los Angeles.

May 26 — Hall of Fame induction, Cooperstown, N.Y.

June 1 — Last day of the season to trade a player.

July 2 — New York Yankees vs. Chicago White Sox at Dyersville, Iowa.

Aug. 22 — Baltimore at Willemstad, Curacao.

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COLLEGE SPORTS/NFL



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Tennessee coach Rick Barnes talks with Santiago Vesco, from Uruguay, who is one of several international players on the team.

A tough choice

For foreign athletes in US, pandemic created problems greater than inability to compete

By PAT EATON-ROBB
Associated Press

STORRS, Conn. — All but one of Anna Makurat's teammates headed home after the NCAA canceled this year's postseason basketball tournament and the school suspended classes amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the 19-year-old UConn freshman from Poland, the decision was not that easy, especially with ever-increasing travel restrictions to and from Europe. She worried about classes restarting while she was overseas and when — or if — she might be able to get back to campus.

Makurat is one of more than 20,000 foreign athletes currently competing at NCAA schools, according to the organization. With competition canceled across all NCAA divisions, many of those athletes face a similar dilemma. Their campuses are shut down, but the coronavirus situation in their homeland is worse than it is in the United States.

The NCAA has advised schools to handle the situation as they see fit for the health and safety of their coaches, staff and student athletes."

For the last two weeks, Makurat has been one of about 50 athletes still living at school with campus largely a ghost town. She spent a lot of her time on her computer and phone, video chatting with family back home. She was able to go out to dinner one night with coach Geno Auriemma and teammate Evina Westbrook, who remained on campus to get treatment for an injury.

Plans changed again after UConn decided to cancel all events for the rest of the semester and move learning online. Makurat was booked Wednesday on a flight home. She will have to self-quarantine for two weeks when she gets back.

"Poland has pretty much closed everything so everyone is staying home anyway," she said. "I have a place at home to work out and we have a basketball hoop outside, so I can get back to shooting. It wasn't a hard decision, once I knew it was an option. I think ev-

eryone right now wants to be with their families, and I'm the same."

Wisconsin-Milwaukee women's tennis player Lucy Harper, who is from Bolton, England, has decided to stay in the U.S. for now with a friend of the family.

"A lot of the flights out to England are getting canceled and they've actually closed two of the terminals down at Manchester (England) airport," she said. "I just made the decision to stay here for now, because I don't know sort of when I'll be able to come back if I leave. We don't know how long this is going to last."

Most of her team is from overseas. She said about half the international players have gone home.

Tennessee's men's basketball team has players from France, Serbia, Uruguay and Finland, which meant Mary-Carter Egger, the director of basketball operations, became a travel agent, looking for the best flights.

"The fact of the matter is, their parents want them home just like I would want my kids home," coach Rick Barnes said.

Last week, several women's basketball players from the University of California figured out their arrangements. Sara Anasta-sielski left on a flight home to Sydney, Australia, last Thursday.

Eveline Lutje Schipholt, from The Netherlands, is staying with teammate Caitlyn Crocker and her family in Southern California. Chen Yue, of Beijing, is currently with friends near Berkeley as the Bay Area continues its shelter in place order.

UConn, meanwhile, has made arrangements to keep dorm rooms, and at least one dining hall, open for the 1,200 mostly foreign students, including athletes, who haven't been able to go anywhere else.

"While all students have been encouraged to leave, UConn is committed to providing students who must stay in Storrs with the support they need while prioritizing their health and well-being," athletic director David Benedict said.

AP sports writers Steve MacPherson in Milwaukee, Teresa Walker in Nashville and Janie McCauley in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Difficult division: NFC West might be tougher this year

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The NFC West was a diabolically difficult division for most of the past decade, and it only seems to be getting tougher.

The NFL's winningest division last season will be stacked again in the fall with four franchises determined to win now. Three teams that posted winning records in 2019 will be joined by what looks like a much-improved version of the Arizona Cardinals, who are among the biggest winners of the early free-agent signing period after adding star receiver DeAndre Hopkins to a West already loaded with playmakers.

This ruthless division has produced five of the NFC's past eight Super Bowl representatives, including the past two. The Los Angeles Rams made that Super Bowl trip less than 14 months ago, but a lackluster offseason and some questionable salary cap management suggest they already might be headed to the division basement despite a star-studded roster under innovative coach Sean McVay.

The NFC West has been hyper-competitive since 2012, and it looks even more unforgiving now. "It's a very, very tough division again," Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said last month. "There's no doubt about it. And I don't think anybody wants to play the (NFC West). It will make us better."

Led by the 13-win NFC champion San Francisco 49ers, the four NFC West teams combined last year for 38 regular-season victories, the most in the league. The West was the NFL's only division with three winning teams, and it would have had three playoff teams under the seven-team postseason format that goes into effect in the upcoming season.

This fall, all four teams from one division could theoretically make the playoffs. If any division is going to accomplish that improbable feat, the NFC West certainly seems to have the best chance, based on these four teams' recent body of work and their prospects for the year ahead.

But that would be easier if the Rams, Seahawks, Niners and Cardinals didn't have to play each other six times a year.

The NFC West has had six wild-card playoff teams and seven conference finalists in the past eight seasons alone, but it hasn't been dominated by anybody for long. All four teams have won the division within the past five years, and the Rams are the only repeat champions in that half-decade.

The most consistent winners have been the Seahawks, who have won at least nine games in each of the past eight seasons, missing the playoffs just once in that span. Carroll's remarkable consistency is even more impressive with the tumult of free agency, but the Seahawks have kept many key pieces in place from



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

Cardinals quarterback Kyler Murray, right, gets away from Browns linebacker Mack Wilson last season. The Cardinals went 5-10-1 last year, but they're a popular pick to improve sharply this year, despite playing in the very competitive NFC West.

'We know our toughest regular-season challenges are in the NFC West.'

Jared Goff
Rams QB

their 11-5 season — and they're still in the running to keep pass rusher Jadeveon Clowney in free agency.

The defending NFC champion Niners are still a powerhouse despite the loss of defensive tackle DeForest Buckner, a cornerstone of their Super Bowl defense during coach Kyle Shanahan's long-awaited breakthrough season.

They got a first-round pick for Buckner, and they retained Arik Armstead and Jimmie Ward.

San Francisco's nine-win improvement turnaround last season wasn't surprising to its three NFC West competitors, who saw McVay orchestrate a seven-win improvement by the Rams in 2017.

Coach Kliff Kingsbury and the Cardinals went 5-10-1 last year, but they're a popular pick to improve sharply this year after swinging a trade for Hopkins and adding additional talent in a fruitful free-agent signing period.

"It's definitely motivating, there is no doubt," Kingsbury said of the Niners' surge. "To see what Kyle has built there, and staying consistent to his culture and who he wanted to be and hanging with it through some tough quarterback injuries. Being in their division, playing them and seeing what they have, it's definitely motivation for our organization."

If the Cards can improve their defense, they're in position to make the leap partly because they have one of the most valuable salary cap management tools in the league: a solid quarterback on a rookie contract.

Kyler Murray passed for 3,722

yards and 20 touchdowns last season, and the overall No. 1 pick has plenty of room for improvement. He will be in his second season in Kingsbury's offense, and he'll be getting the ball to Hopkins, Larry Fitzgerald, Christian Kirk and Kenyan Drake.

So where does that leave the Rams, who missed the playoffs despite going 9-7 last year?

Big changes are underway in LA despite the Rams' three straight winning seasons under McVay. The now-34-year-old wunderkind dismissed a major portion of his staff after missing the postseason, and he hired untested career assistant Brandon Staley to run his defense.

The job is even tougher because Los Angeles' biggest offseason addition might be its new logo and uniforms. The Rams have lost running back Todd Gurley, defensive tackle Michael Brockers, leading tackler Cory Littleton, edge rusher Dante Fowler and elite nickel back Nickell Robey-Coleman in the past two years alone.

But they've still got Aaron Donald, Jalen Ramsey and one of the NFL's best collections of receivers for Jared Goff with McVay pulling the offensive strings. It's too early to write off the Rams in the NFC West; good isn't good enough.

"This has always been a tough division since I've been here, so that's no surprise," Goff said recently. "We know our toughest regular-season challenges are in the NFC West."

Contributed to this report by Tim Booth in Seattle

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Game Zero: Italian soccer match led to spread of virus

Bergamo has become an epicenter of pandemic

BY TALES AZZONI
AND ANDREW DAMPF
Associated Press

ROME

It was the biggest soccer game in Atalanta's history and a third of Bergamo's population made the short trip to Milan's famed San Siro Stadium.

Nearly 2,500 fans of visiting Spanish club Valencia also traveled to that Champions League match.

More than a month later, experts are pointing to the Feb. 19 game as one of the biggest reasons why Bergamo has become one of the epicenters of the coronavirus pandemic — a "biological bomb" was the way one respiratory specialist put it — and why 35% of Valencia's team became infected.

The match, which local media have dubbed "Game Zero," was held two days before the first case of locally transmitted COVID-19 was confirmed in Italy.

"We were mid-February so we didn't have the circumstances of what was happening," Bergamo Mayor Giorgio Gori said this week during a live Facebook chat with the Foreign Press Association in Rome. "If it's true what they're saying that the virus was already circulating in Europe in January, then it's very probable that 40,000 Bergamaschi in the stands of San Siro, all together, exchanged the virus between them. As is possible that some Bergamaschi that night got together in houses, bars to watch the match and did the same."

"Unfortunately, we couldn't have known. No one knew the virus was already here," the mayor added. "It was inevitable."

Less than a week after the game, the first cases were reported in the province of Bergamo.

At about the same time in Valencia, a journalist who traveled

to the match became the second person infected in the region, and it didn't take long before people who were in contact with him also had the virus, as did Valencia fans who were at the game.

While Atalanta announced its first positive case Tuesday for goalkeeper Marco Sportiello, Valencia said more than a third of its squad got infected, "despite the strict measures adopted by the club" after the match in Milan.

As of Tuesday, nearly 7,000 people in the province of Bergamo had tested positive for COVID-19 and more than 1,000 people had died from the virus — making Bergamo the most deadly province in all of Italy for the pandemic. The Valencia region had more than 2,600 people infected.

Luca Lorini, the head of the intensive care unit at the Pope John XXIII hospital in Bergamo, currently has 88 patients under his care with the coronavirus; not including many more in other parts of the hospital.

"I'm sure that 40,000 people hugging and kissing each other while standing a centimeter apart — four times, because Atalanta scored four goals (the final result was 4-1) — was definitely a huge accelerator for contagion," Lorini said.

"Right now we're at war. When peace time comes, I can assure you we will go and see how many of the 40,000 people who went to the game became infected," Lorini added. "Right now we have other priorities."

Silvio Brusafarro, the head of Italy's Superior Institute of Health, said over the weekend at the nightly nationally televised briefing by the civil protection agency that the game was "one of the hypotheses" being evaluated as a source of the crisis in Bergamo.

By last week, Bergamo's cemetery became so overwhelmed by the number of dead that military



PHOTOS BY LUCA BRUNO, ABOVE, AND ANTONIO CALANNI, BELOW/AP

Above: Atalanta players celebrate at the end of the Champions League round of 16, first leg, soccer match against Valencia at San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy. It was the biggest soccer game in Atalanta's history. **Below:** More than 40,000 fans from Bergamo made the short trip to the match. More than a month later, experts are pointing to the Feb. 19 game as one of the biggest reasons why Bergamo has become one of the epicenters of the coronavirus pandemic.

By the numbers

74K

Italy has the most cases of coronavirus in Europe with 74,386 as of Thursday morning.

7K

People in the Bergamo, Italy province that have tested positive for coronavirus with more than 1,000 deaths.

40K

Fans from Bergamo who attended a Champions League round of 16 game on Feb. 19 in Milan.

SOURCE: Associated Press, Johns Hopkins

trucks began transporting bodies to a neighboring region for cremation.

Italy remained the European country with the most cases, nearly 74,000, and with more than 7,500 deaths — the most worldwide and more than twice as many as China.

Spain is the next country in Europe with the most cases, nearly 56,000, and it has surpassed China in the number of deaths with more than 4,089.

More than 496,592 people worldwide have been infected and the number of dead closed in on 22,100, according to the running count kept by Johns Hopkins University. Overall, more than 114,713 have recovered.

The official attendance for the Feb. 19 game was 45,792 — a "home" record for Atalanta, a small club making its debut in Europe's top club competition.

Atalanta captain Alejandro "Papu" Gomez told Argentine Daily Ole it was "terrible" to have played that game.

"It's a city of 120,000 people and that day (40,000) went to the

Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera. "In buses, cars, trains. A biological bomb, unfortunately."

Italian soccer players' association president Damiano Tommasi believes sports authorities should look long and hard at the Atalanta match before restarting leagues.

"Look at what's happening in China, where players are testing positive for the coronavirus now — despite all the safety rules and precautions being taken," Tommasi told the AP, referring to a recent positive test for former Manchester United midfielder Marouane Fellaini with Chinese club Shandong Luneng.

Over the past month, Atalanta has mourned the deaths of five former staff members. While announcements on the club website made no mention of the virus, local media have reported that at least four of them died with COVID-19.

"Some squads have chosen not to test their players unless they show symptoms," Tommasi said. "Other squads tested everyone. These are individual choices."

"The head of the civil protection agency has talked about the likelihood that for every proven positive case there are probably 10 actual positives. ... The high number of positives at Valencia makes you wonder."

With the Champions League suspended because of the pandemic, Atalanta has no idea where it might play in the quarterfinals — which again would be the club's biggest game in its history. In the meantime, both the Bergamo team and Valencia are left wondering about the unforeseen effects of their match in February.



Azzoni reported from Madrid. Associated Press writers Daniela Matar in Milan and Joseph Wilson in Rome, and reporter Patricia Thomas in Rome contributed to this report.

OLYMPICS/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Tokyo Olympics seek new date for opening, closing

By STEPHEN WADE
Associated Press

TOKYO — The Tokyo Olympics need new dates for the opening and closing ceremonies in 2021.

Nothing much can get done until those dates are worked out by the International Olympic Committee, the Japanese government and Tokyo organizers.

"We must decide this soon, otherwise it will be hard to decide on other things to follow," Toshiro Muto, the CEO of the organizing committee, told his 30 senior directors — all men but one — seated in a large meeting room on Thursday.

Two days after the unprecedented postponement was announced, the group gathered for the first meeting of what is being called the "Tokyo 2020 New Launch Task Force." They must put the Olympics back together after they were torn apart by the coronavirus pandemic.

Muto and the president of the organizing committee, Yoshiro Mori, each gave per speeches. Mori, an 82-year-old former Japanese prime minister, drew on war memories from his youth to summon the resolve to redo in a few months what was seven years in the planning.

He talked of his father going "to the war in the Pacific" and leaving a rugby ball and a baseball glove behind for his young son.

"I'm sorry I'm an old person and I talk about the old days," Mori said. "I'm comparing this to the old days and I might be criticized by the media. However, this is the emotion I have inside me and this is the emotion I have as we face the predicament in front of us."

Muto ran off a condensed string of issues to be resolved: ticketing, security, venues, merchandise, accommodation, the Athletes Village, transportation and lining up unpaid volunteers. He added he

was looking at "thousands of contracts" and the interests of broadcasters, sponsors, the IOC, world sports federations and national Olympic committees.

"I didn't imagine at all we'd be tested to this degree," he acknowledged.

He also voiced another reality. "Additional expenses are going to be quite massive we assume," Muto said.

The Japanese financial newspaper Nikkei has estimated added costs due to the delay of \$2.7 billion.

This would go on top of an official budget of \$12.6 billion. A Japanese national audit agency, however, says the actual amount of spending is about twice that size.

IOC President Thomas Bach said Wednesday that "all options are on the table" for new dates. He said next year's Olympics don't have to be restricted to summer in the Northern Hemisphere and might occur sooner.

Two of the marquee Olympic events — track and swimming — have already scheduled their own world championships for July and August of 2021.

If the Olympics are moved into spring, when it's cooler in Tokyo, they clash with the end of the European soccer season. In North America, they would bump into Major League Baseball, NBA basketball, NHL hockey and possibly even college basketball. That's assuming normal sports schedules resume by then.

"The postponed Olympic Games will need sacrifices," Bach said.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Carolina State coach Jim Valvano, center with fist raised, celebrates after his basketball team defeated Houston to win the 1983 nationals championship in Albuquerque, N.M.

Most upsetting: 1983 title run by North Carolina State hard to beat

By AARON BEARD
Associated Press

There are still moments, even after nearly four decades, when Ernie Myers has trouble believing it all really happened for his North Carolina State team.

The series of tense upsets.

The airball-turned-buzzer-beating dunk to stun top-ranked Houston and Phi Slama Jama. And the 1983 national championship that came with it, capping a run unlike anything college basketball has seen before or since.

"We kind of said we put the madness in March, as in what you see today," Myers said. "That's why people watch the tournament, because they want to see the upsets."

Fans won't get that chance this year with the NCAA Tournament canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Still, the sixth-seeded Wolfpack's win is oft-repeated lore every March and CBS was showing the game Saturday as part of a weekend of March Madness classics broadcast to fill the void on what would have been the first weekend of tournament.

There's Lorenzo Charles stuffing home Dereck Whittenburg's missed 30-footer for the 54-52 win against a team with future NBA greats Hakeem Olajuwon and Clyde Drexler. There's the late coach Jim Valvano running around searching for someone to hug after just the latest tournament nail-biter for the "Cardiac Pack," who also edged No. 1 seed Virginia in a regional final to end 7-foot-4 center Ralph Sampson's college career.

"You're talking about it gives the fans hope — man, it gives us hope every day that if you don't give up, anything can happen," said Cozell McQueen, who had 12 rebounds against the Cougars, then celebrated by climbing to stand atop one of the rims.

Retired BYU coach Dave Rose, a captain on that high-flying Houston team, said the pain faded but only weeks later. Memories of missed free throws and a blown second-half lead remain today.

He also noted the game's added significance: Valencia's inspirational story ultimately aided the creation of the V Foundation for Cancer Research before his death from the disease in April 1993. Charles died in June 2011 in a bus crash.

"It's been with me," Rose, who noted he is often identified as a Phi Slama Jama team member. "For me — this sounds crazy, it's probably easier for me to say now that I've retired — it's way better to have played in that game and lost than not to have had the opportunity to play."

UMBC (2018)

It's still stunning to rewatch UMBC blowing out top overall seed Virginia in the only 16-over-1 upset in tournament history.

Forward Joe Sherburne said he watched YouTube highlights that "gave me goosebumps" for months



EUGENE HOSHINO/AP

Officials light a lantern from the Olympic Flame at the end of a flame display ceremony in Iwaki, northern Japan, Wednesday. Organizers are working on new dates for the start of the 2020 Games.

and still enjoys discovering things from that night like fan video from the arena. But it's not his first choice of everyday conversation, either.

"If there's an event or something I do that ends up being cooler than that, that would be great," said Sherburne, who had 14 points against Virginia. "But I doubt that's going to happen. I'm all for it being discussed for years down the line."

George Mason (2006)

George Mason was such a questionable tournament choice that then-coach Jim Larranga joked his team was an "at-extra-large" entry. There was no second guessing the bid once the 11th-seeded Patriots went to the Final Four after an 86-84 overtime win against top-seeded Connecticut.

The Huskies had spent five weeks at No. 1 in the Top 25 and never dropped below fourth. Yet George Mason overcame disadvantages in size and athleticism to secure a trip to Indianapolis as the party crasher among the big-conference teams.

Richmond (1991)

Before UMBC, the biggest round-of-64 upsets had come with eight No. 15 seeds beating No. 2 seeds. It wasn't until Richmond beat Syracuse 73-69 that fans believed it could happen.

The Orange had spent all but one week ranked in the top 10 under Jim Boeheim and were led by first-team AP All-American Billy Owens. Team member Mike Hopkins, now Washington's head coach, remembers feeling "devastated" but it didn't linger.

Villanova (1985)

Villanova remains the lowest seed to win it all at No. 8. To do it, the Wildcats had to play the perfect game against AP national player of the year Patrick Ewing and defending national champion Georgetown.

The Hoyas were 35-2, including two regular-season wins against Villanova, and had been ranked No. 1 or No. 2 all year. But the 10-loss Wildcats shot a record 78.6% (22-for-28) behind Final Four most outstanding player Ed Pinckney in the 66-64 win.

Texas Western (1966)

Texas Western (now UTEP) changed college basketball with its win against top-ranked Kentucky for the national championship.

The Miners became the first team to start five black players in the final against the all-white Wildcats featuring Pat Riley and coached by four-time national champion Adolph Rupp. Coach Don Haskins, who died in September 2008, had said he was simply starting his best players instead of trying to make a social statement, though the 72-65 victory eventually expanded recruiting opportunities nationally for black players.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

TOP 10 ALL-TIME

With no March Madness, The Associated Press is moving stories and historical pieces to help fill some of the void in college basketball. A panel of AP sports writers voted in March on the top 10 men's basketball games in the history of the NCAA Tournament. They are being republished because the sport has been shut down by the coronavirus pandemic. The following game story, from March 29, 1982, was voted No. 9.

No. 9

Breakthrough

In seventh trip to Final Four, UNC's Smith earns first title

By KEN RAPPORTE
Associated Press

A national champion at last, North Carolina basketball Coach Dean Smith can finally say what he thinks about his critics.

"A great writer in Charlotte once said that it was our system that kept us from winning the national championship," Smith says. "It's the most ridiculous comment ever made and I've always wanted to say that. We don't have a 'system.' We try to use our talent."

Part of that talent, All-American forward James Worthy and freshman guard

Michael Jordan, teamed up to help the Tar Heels beat Georgetown 63-62 in the NCAA final Monday night, the closest championship game in 23 years.

Worthy won the duel of dunks with Georgetown's Patrick Ewing, scoring a career-high 28 points and winning the Most Outstanding Player award. Jordan scored

16 points, including the game-winning shot with 15 seconds left.

The NCAA championship was the only thing missing from Smith's trophy case in an otherwise brilliant career that includes one of the best records in coaching — 468-145 over 21 years in Chapel Hill — an Olympic gold medal and acknowledgment by peers of his basketball greatness.

Smith had brought North Carolina teams to six previous Final Fours only to end up a loser.

Disappointed in the past, Smith said he would have been doubly disappointed if the Tar Heels hadn't won Monday night.

"We had the best basketball team (in the tournament), I thought," he said. "This was the only year it would have bothered me."

Smith didn't necessarily think he had the best team Monday night, however. "I think we were the lucky team," he said.

The Tar Heels thus certified their No. 1 ranking going into the tournament, the first time that has happened since Kentucky in 1978.

"We were ranked No. 1 in the country in the preseason and the postseason," Smith said. "Everybody shot at us. We took people's best shots and found a way to win."

North Carolina proved its worth as No. 1 by winning 13 games at the start of the season, including five triumphs over teams eventually selected for the NCAA Tournament. Both Kentucky and Virginia were undefeated and ranked No. 2 when the Tar Heels knocked them off.

The Tar Heels dropped from the top spot after a loss to Wake Forest with center Sam Perkins out sick. Their only other loss this season was to Virginia, but they finished with 16 straight victories and a 32-2 record.

Mondays night's victory was one of the toughest of all.

Ewing was responsible for that. The 7-foot Georgetown freshman scored 23 points, grabbed a game-high 11 rebounds and blocked two shots. He also was called for goaltending five times, three on Worthy shots early in the first half.

"I was amazed at Pat Ewing," said Smith. "He has not shot well in tapes that I watched."

Luckily for North Carolina, the Tar Heels had a pretty good freshman of their own in Jordan who collected a team-high nine rebounds in addition to the 18-foot jump shot from the corner with 15 seconds left that gave Smith the championship.

There was still time, about 10 seconds, for Georgetown to move downcourt and pull it out.

Some felt it was also the moment for Georgetown to call a timeout. Coach John Thompson explained why he didn't: "When



BRIAN SMITH, THE TIMES-PICAYUNE, THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE/AP

North Carolina forward James Worthy, right, keeps the ball away from Georgetown's Eric Smith during the national championship game on March 29, 1982 in New Orleans. Worthy was named the Most Outstanding player award, scoring 28 points.

Carolina called a time out (with 32 seconds to go), I told my players not to call one if they (North Carolina) scored so Dean wouldn't have a chance to set up a defense

against a last shot."

As it turned out, Worthy proved better than any defense that could have been arranged. He caught a pass thrown by apparently confused Georgetown guard Fred Brown, a pass that should have gone to All-American guard Eric "Sleepy" Floyd, who scored 18 points for the Hoyas.

"I saw him pick up the ball at the top of the key," said Worthy. "He was going to throw it to someone on the wings. I thought he'd try to lob it over me, so I threw it away from me. I was surprised that it was right in my chest."

Worthy took off downcourt as time ran out for Georgetown.

Worthy was eventually fouled, setting up two shots. He missed them, but it was already too late for the sixth-ranked Hoyas, who ended their season 30-7.

With Ewing and Floyd each scoring 10 points, Georgetown held a tenuous 33-31 lead at the half. There was no breathing room in the second half, when Georgetown briefly held the game's biggest lead — four points — and North Carolina resorted to its four-corner delay game up by just one.

It was the second NCAA title for North Carolina. The last time was in 1957, a 54-53 triple-overtime victory over Kansas in what is considered the most exciting championship game.

This one wasn't far behind.

There were 13 lead changes, nine in the second half, and the one-point margin was the first in the NCAA finals since 1959, when California edged West Virginia 71-70.

"We have nothing to be ashamed of," said Thompson. "I am a little depressed. North Carolina is a very outstanding team. Our kids played hard — and that's all I could ask of them."



PETE LEADCO/AP

North Carolina basketball coach Dean Smith cuts down the net as players and fans cheer following the Tar Heels' 63-62 victory over Georgetown. The NCAA championship was the only thing missing from Smith's trophy case in an otherwise brilliant career that includes one of the best records in coaching — 468-145 over 21 years in Chapel Hill — an Olympic gold medal and seven trips to the Final Four.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

TOP 10 ALL-TIME

With no March Madness, The Associated Press is moving stories and historical pieces to help fill some of the void in college basketball. A panel of AP sports writers voted in March on the top 10 men's basketball games in the history of the NCAA Tournament. They are being republished because the sport has been shut down by the coronavirus pandemic. The following game story, from April 5, 1993, was voted No. 10.

No. 10

Fab Five falls to UNC on fatal timeout call

Webber's unbelievable error helps Tar Heels capture national title

BY JIM O'CONNELL
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Same building. Same result. Different blunder.

Dean Smith won his second national championship Monday night when North Carolina beat Michigan 77-71. And like the first title he won at the Superdome, this one wasn't sealed until somebody made a costly, almost unbelievable, error.

The Tar Heels won in 1982 on a closing jumper by Michael Jordan and a botched pass by Georgetown's Fred Brown. Monday night's game wasn't settled until Michigan's Chris Webber called a timeout the Wolverines didn't have with 11 seconds to go.

"You can call it lucky, you can call it fortunate, but it still says NCAA championship," Smith said.

Make no mistake, the Tar Heels were not handed this title. Eric Montross and George Lynch banged inside and Donald Williams stroked three-pointers in putting Smith, the second-winningest coach of all time, into some high NCAA tournament company.

The loss sent Michigan, a team so fabulous for two seasons, home again as a runner-up. The Wolverines were beaten 71-51 by Duke last season when they started five freshmen. No one is certain how many will be back for their junior season.

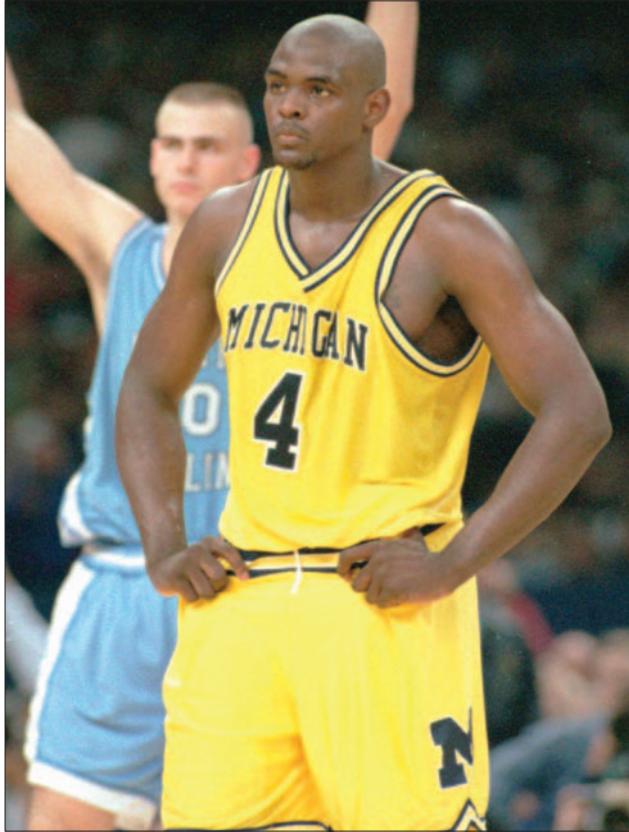
The Tar Heels led 73-71 when Pat Sullivan missed the second of two free throws with 20 seconds left. Webber, who had been so big for the Wolverines all season as well as in the title game, grabbed the rebound, brought the ball upcourt almost out of control and called for a timeout in front of his bench. Michigan, however, was out of timeouts and a technical foul was called.

"I just called a timeout and we didn't have one and it probably cost us the game," a disconsolate Webber said. "If I'd have known we didn't have any timeouts left, I wouldn't have called a timeout."

Williams made both free throws, added two more on the ensuing possession, and then it was over. Smith left the Superdome a court champion — again.

"I think Coach Smith might move here," Montross said. "Crazy things happen and some of it is just luck."

Smith is the fourth active coach to win two titles, joining Bob Knight of Indiana, Denny Crum of Louisville and Mike Krzyzewski-



SUSAN RAGAN/AP

Michigan forward Chris Webber stands by as North Carolina center Eric Montross celebrates during the Tar Heels' technical foul shots in the final seconds of the NCAA championship game at the Superdome in New Orleans on April 5, 1993. Webber called a time out the Wolverines did not have, and Michigan was charged with a technical foul and lost possession of the ball. UNC went on to win 77-71.

ki of Duke. On the all-time list the only ones ahead of him are John Wooden of UCLA with 10 titles, Adolph Rupp of Kentucky with four and Knight with three.

But Smith has been to nine Final Fours and the rap against him was that his team couldn't go home with the title. Asked if the victory over Michigan will end the criticism, he said: "They said that the last time, I didn't win the bubble with 46 seconds to play."

"In the heat of the moment strange things happen," he said. "We talked in the huddle that we had no timeouts. Chris or I heard someone holler or call for a

I'm pleased we've been a national contender for a number of years. It is exciting to say 'it's over; we won it.' We might not be the best, but we're the champions."

Michigan coach Steve Fisher, who was also trying for his second national championship, said the players had been told there were no timeouts in their last bubble with 46 seconds to play.

"In the heat of the moment strange things happen," he said. "We talked in the huddle that we had no timeouts. Chris or I heard someone holler or call for a

timeout. It's an awful way for the season to end. No one feels worse than Chris, but we're not here except for Chris."

Williams finished with 25 points, matching his semifinal output from three-point range with five in 11 attempts. Montross had 16 points and Lynch had 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Williams, who got the Tar Heels to the Final Four with two huge three-pointers in overtime against Cincinnati, was the Final Four's most outstanding player.

"His run in these last four

'You can call it lucky, you can call it fortunate, but it still says NCAA championship.'

Dean Smith
North Carolina head coach

games has been outstanding," Smith said. "When he's on a streak, we screen for him and look for him. I'm impressed with him. He was in a different zone, I thought he was going to make it every time he went up."

Webber led Michigan with 23 points and 11 rebounds, and Jimmy King and Jalen Rose added 15 and 12 points.

North Carolina led 53-46 with 15:42 to play and then things tightened — as expected — in the second championship game matchup of No. 1 seeds. The first time it happened was 1982.

Michigan scored four straight points and, until Montross' dunk with one minute to play, neither team led by more than four.

"We all make mistakes," Michigan's Ray Jackson said. "I think there was a lot of confusion. Everybody was saying, 'No timeout.' The locker room was quiet and everybody was hurting. We lost the national championship."

Last year they lost in a blowout to Duke, which was defending its title. This year, Michigan could have won it.

"It feels the same, the exact same," Webber said. "This was totally different. We had a chance to win tonight and we didn't get it done. A year ago we didn't have a chance to win in the final seconds."

Smith received the loudest cheers from Carolina fans when he climbed a ladder to cut the nets. The cheer might have been a thank you for a 77-223 record, including 55-23 in the NCAA Tournament.

"It isn't any particular place that accounts for winning," Smith said, "But I'll always have great memories of New Orleans."

Fisher still has a 17-3 NCAA tournament record. He won the 1989 title as an interim coach and then recruited the fabled class of freshmen who brought him to the title game two straight years.

"What I want to do is put a bear hug on all of them and let them know how proud we are of all of them," he said. "North Carolina played a terrific game. They're a great team. Our Michigan ball club, I also thought, fought gallantly. We also have a terrific team. I could not be more proud of a team than I am of this group. We'll move on. We'll be better people because of it."

SPORTS



Mamma mia!

Italian soccer match identified as an epicenter of outbreak » **Page 52**

MLB

Put on hold

‘Opening Day’ will have to wait due to pandemic

By Stephen Hawkins
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas

There will be no hot dogs on the grill, no beer on tap, no vendors in the stands selling peanuts and Cracker Jack.

The shiny new stadium deep in the heart of Texas will still be waiting for its first Rangers game. Instead of warming up for his debut with the New York Yankees after a record \$324 million, nine-year contract, Gerrit Cole is playing catch with his wife at home.

With the start of the Major League Baseball season indefinitely

SEE WAIT ON PAGE 50



A grounds crew member walks on the field inside Busch Stadium, home of the St. Louis Cardinals, on Wednesday. The start of the regular season, which was set to begin Thursday, is on hold indefinitely because of the coronavirus pandemic.

JEFF ROBERSON / AP

TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

